













**THE HISTORY OF  
FRENCH COLONIAL  
POLICY  
1870-1925**

by

**STEPHEN H. ROBERTS**



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## PREFACE

**T**HIS book is an attempt to cover an obvious gap in modern European history. It is strange that, despite the importance of the subject, nothing exists on it in English, even in the slightest form. My own connection with the topic goes back a long way. During earlier researches on the Pacific, and while still in Australia and the Pacific, I worked out French policy in that part of the world. From that, I went on to submit it as a doctoral thesis at the University of London, working both in London and in France. I am particularly indebted to the resources of the Paris Libraries and Government Departments, and to those persons in Marseilles who gave me much information on the mercantile aspect and the connection of the mainland with North Africa. By that time the theme had outgrown the original idea of a doctoral thesis, and assumed its present form.

It seems fitting at this stage to point out that the book does not pretend to be an interpretation based on actual colonial experience: it is a piece of historical research and analysis, the main colonial element coming from the fact that the author himself has lived for most of his life in a colony and thus has some capability of understanding the colonial point of view. It would be foolish to assume that actually living in the French colonies would not result in a more living presentation: but, on the other hand, one can write of the Middle Ages without having lived in them. Such a work as this has to be considered in light of what is claimed for it—and the claim is for historical presentation and comparative analysis rather than for a narration of personal colonial experience.

The book itself divides into two parts, each with a distinct approach. The raw material is contained within a regional survey, which takes each colony in turn and gives the full details of its particular history and position. As against this, are the chapters in which general principles are discussed and conclusions drawn—chapters in which some knowledge of the events dealt with is assumed. These include all of Part I,

and the long chapter on a comparison of French colonization with that of other Powers. In the first section, the aim is a succinct presentation of the relevant facts : in the second, the view-point is more consciously analytical and critical—and hence more or less personal. The writer asks for a more elastic acceptance of these critical chapters, because, being interpretative, they are open to conflicting conclusions. They are more constructive, less fixed, more suggestive ; and nothing like finality or dogmatism is claimed for them—far less, indeed, than for the regional survey, and even there, the writer is conscious of the fluidity of his conclusions. As a whole, therefore, the book resolves itself into an academic and supposedly impartial presentation of the facts of fifty years of French colonization, and a discussion, avowedly influenced by the personality of the critic, of those facts and the theories behind them. One part is thus fixed, the other more elastic : and the reception of each should be tempered by a consideration of the different approach in each case.

The exigencies of a general plan demanded that the general sections should come first, in order to enable the reader to get some idea of the background. But this, in turn, necessitated writing of many facts and treating them as known to the reader, before they were fully explained. To have explained them all, as they occurred in the general section, would have taken away whatever clarity that section may possess : the reader is requested, therefore, should such a position arise, to refer to the index and the regional survey that follows. This particularly applies to much of the material in Part I—the theory. As this is in part a commentary on Part II—the practice—it is obvious that many points can only become clearer by reference to the succeeding part. This seemed preferable, however, to having Part II precede Part I, and to having a long regional survey tire the reader before any attempt was made to state the general theory. For a somewhat similar reason, the comparative chapter was isolated from the remainder of the general material and placed last—the general plan seemed to demand this.

With respect to the conclusions, it must be remembered that any conclusion about colonization remains somewhat in the nature of a hazard. The very nature of the problems dealt with makes this so. The author, therefore, accompanies his conclusions with the proviso that most of them are ten-

tative, and may be changed. All that can be said is that there is not the slightest conscious bias, either of approach or treatment: the writer had no preconceived ideas to warp his facts. Actually, there were constant changes. The analysis of Algeria was approached with much admiration for the French effort there, but the pressure of facts gradually forced the writer into a distinctly opposite position: and this happened frequently. It may be said that this particular conclusion is controversial, but the writer holds that it is a legitimate deduction from the facts, with no attempt to withhold or distort relevant matter. Beyond that one may not go, save to voice the opinions of a reader,—Can anyone say whether Algeria or any other colony has been a success or a failure? With deference, I should insist that there are relative successes and failures, and that these can be discerned—not absolutely, but in comparison with other efforts, either by France or other Powers. The conclusions given are thus only tentative and relevant: that is all that is claimed for them.

As is natural, my obligations are many. For my initial interest, I must thank Professor Ernest Scott, of the University of Melbourne, for still another of the innumerable things I owe to him: and for his help at every stage, even to wading through galley-proofs. In London, Professor Lilian Knowles found no trouble too great, even in her illness: and my debt to my supervisor, Professor Harold Laski, is difficult to acknowledge. His sympathetic understanding of things French and his critical analyses were available at every stage, perhaps more than he knew. My debt to him is very real and very appreciated. Acknowledgments of my obligations in Paris would be legion, for there were so many who made the work there so utterly enjoyable. The many librarians, both in London and Paris, I cannot particularize, as their aid was too spontaneous in every case. But I should like to mention the facilities provided by Mr. Evans Lewin at the Royal Colonial Institute, especially his periodicals; and the quiet atmosphere Dr. Meikle works up at the Institute of Historical Research. Finally comes a debt which is unique in its magnitude, to Mr. B. M. Headicar, the Librarian of the London School of Economics, who, once again, has taken off my hands all the business arrangements connected with a book. What this means to a person back again at the Antipodes will readily be recognized, especially when it is added that Mr. Headicar took



over every detail of its handling, even to arranging for the reading of the proofs. I simply cannot adequately express my indebtedness to him : a busy man, no amount of pestering seemed too great for him. For the large and troublesome task of reading the proofs I must thank Mr. W. H. Hosford.

I should like to add that I was back in Australia before this work reached proof-form, and hence was unable to supervise all of those details that arise in a book's last stages. Beyond seeing the galley-proofs and part of the page proofs, I played no part in presenting this book : such errors as there are, therefore, are due to circumstances, and neither to the author (who was away from the usual contacts) nor to those who so kindly arranged to see a strange manuscript through the Press, with the writer in a position where it took three months to consult him.

STEPHEN H. ROBERTS.

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## LEADING EVENTS IN FRENCH COLONIZATION

- 1830. Conquest of Algeria.
- 1841. Bugeaud in Algeria: schemes of military colonization.
- 1843. Protectorate over Tahiti.
- 1844. *Bureaux Arabes* set up in Algeria.
- 1848. Slavery abolished in the Antilles: franchise given to the negroes.
- 1849. Libreville (French Congo) founded.  
Colonial banks set up in the sugar-islands.
- 1852. Move to South Algeria.
- 1853. New Caledonia annexed.
- 1854. Faïdherbe commenced to reorganize the Senegal.
- 1857. Kabylie conquered (Algeria).
- 1860. France obtains four provinces of Cochin-China.
- 1863. Napoleon III's policy of "an Arab Kingdom."  
Protectorate over Cambodia.
- 1867. Three more provinces of Cochin-China occupied.  
Doudart de Lagrée explores the Mekong to Yunnan.
- 1869. Imperial Commission on Algerian affairs (Béhic's).
- 1871. The Third Republic.  
Civil Government-General set up in Algeria.  
Insurrection in Algeria.  
Scheme to settle Alsatians in Algeria.
- 1874. Protectorate over Annam.
- 1875. De Brazza's expeditions started in Congo.
- 1876. March to Niger started in West Africa.
- 1878. Heyday of "official colonization" in Algeria.
- 1879. Civil government *really* started in Algeria (as against the nominal change of 1871).  
"Rattachements" to Paris started in Algeria.
- 1880. Anti-colonialism at its height in France.
- 1881. Start of the Ferry fights for the colonies.  
Conquest of Tunisia (Treaty of Bardo).
- 1882. Commencement of the occupation of the Congo interior.
- 1883. Fall of Bamako (Niger): forward-policy sets in in earnest.  
Stronger protectorate set up over Annam.  
Commencement of the war in Tonkin.

1885. Conference of Berlin.  
 Protectorate over Madagascar.  
 Fall of Ferry on the Tonkin question.  
 Peace in Tonkin: Paul Bert organizes the land.
1887. Binger's expedition to the Niger bend.  
 Anglo-French Convention for the New Hebrides.
1889. Colonial Congress strongly favours assimilation.
1890. Commencement of the period of military expansion.
1891. "Comité de l'Afrique Française" formed.
1892. Senatorial Commission on Algeria (the most important in French colonization).  
 Law of tariff-assimilation passed.  
 Conquest of Dahomey.
1893. Occupation of Timbuktu.
1894. Ministry of the Colonies created.
1895. Penetration of the Sahara resumed (abandoned since 1881).  
 Formation of the Government-General of West Africa.  
 Occupation of Madagascar.
1896. Madagascar annexed.  
 Abolition of *rattachements* in Algeria.
1897. Paul Doumer reorganizes Indo-China.
1898. Marchand and Kitchener meet at Fashoda (Nile).  
 Commission of Concessions set up (i.e., start of the Congo rush).  
*Délégations Financières* instituted in Algeria.
1900. Fourreau-Lamy Mission across the Sahara to the Chad.  
 Junction of missions from West, Equatorial, and North Africa at the Chad to overthrow Rabah.  
*Law of budgetary-autonomy passed, for the colonies.*
1903. Conquest of Mauretania.
1905. Commencement of period of drift in colonial policy (1905-1914).  
 Outcry regarding the French Congo.
1906. Decrees reorganizing the French Congo.  
 Colonial Conference opposes assimilation in all its branches.  
 Conference of Algéciras on Morocco.  
 Occupation of Shawia (Morocco).  
 Anglo-French Condominium over the New Hebrides.
1907. Commencement of the pacification of Wadai.
1909. Messimy attacks colonial system in his budget.
1910. Commencement of the idea of "the black army."
1911. Viollette's attacks on the colonial system in the budget-report.  
 Part of the French Congo ceded to Germany.  
 Colonial decentralization started.
1912. Conquest of Morocco.  
 Troubles in Tunisia.

- 1913. Conscription applied to the Algerian natives.
- 1914. Outbreak of war: Togo and the Cameroons occupied.
- 1917. First Colonial Conference (Maginot's).
- 1918. Flandin interpellation on colonial production (Senate).
- 1919. Naturalization law for the Algerian natives.  
*Destour* (separatist) movement in Tunisia.
- 1920. Monetary crisis in Indo-China.  
*Conseil Supérieur des Colonies* reorganized.  
Agency-General of the Colonies set up in Paris.
- 1921. First Parliamentary Commissions exclusively for colonial matters.  
Sarraut's scheme for a general *mise en valeur*.  
Projects to irrigate the Niger Valley.



## POSITION OF THE FRENCH EMPIRE

When acquired.	Area (sq. kms.).	Population (1921 Census).	Imports (frs.). <sup>1</sup>	Exports (frs.). <sup>1</sup>
Algeria, 1830. . . . .	575,388	5,806,090	3,361,851,000	1,597,975,000
Tunisia, 1881. . . . .	125,130	2,093,939	635,562,552	337,057,488
Morocco, 1912 . . . . .	600,000	5,400,000	1,000,474,464	268,875,057
West Africa, 1817 . . . .	4,665,000	12,238,216	395,277,123	410,000,000
Equatorial Africa, 1882 .	2,687,190	5,860,868	75,091,230	43,361,565
Madagascar, 1896 . . . .	582,180	3,382,161	225,921,048	108,308,097
Indo-China, 1860 . . . . .	710,842	18,983,203	1,075,930,000	1,478,470,000
Somali Coast . . . . .	120,000	64,794	129,618,863	109,361,080
Réunion . . . . .	2,500	172,190	71,269,455	78,654,501
French India . . . . .	515	269,579	23,583,192	24,554,280
St. Pierre	240	3,918	22,988,803	19,690,756
Martinique	985	244,439	84,508,370	89,110,544
Guadeloupe	1,780	229,839	78,989,677	74,610,693
Guiana	90,000	44,202	34,849,160	36,445,867
New Caledonia, 1853 . . .	20,000	47,505	48,564,425	27,676,379
Tahiti, 1843 . . . . .	3,060	31,901	14,401,153	24,360,901
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>10,184,810</b>	<b>55,272,844</b>	<b>7,278,880,515</b>	<b>4,728,492,208</b>

<sup>1</sup> NOTE.—These trade-figures are for 1921 and for North Africa, 1920, because those were the years taken by M. Albert Sarraut as his basis for the post-war *mise en valeur*. Later figures will be found in the text. In the years above-quoted, the average value of the franc was 50 (1920) and 62·5 (1921). A detailed analysis of the trade for these years will be found in the appendix to this work. Graphs to show the position at various dates are on Map 2.

PART I

FRENCH COLONIAL POLICY IN  
THEORY



## CHAPTER I

### GENERAL COLONIAL POLICY

WHEN the question of colonization arose in the nineteenth century, France had a tradition and a legacy with which to face it. The tradition was that of the first overseas Empire and of the long combat with England for primacy in the New World. Colbert, Frontenac, La Salle, d'Iberville, Martin, Dupleix—the names unrolled themselves in a mist of adventurous memory, and few thought of Law, or the hide-bound *Intendants*, or the way in which the French at home had deliberately dissipated the colonial gains. The tradition was rather a rose-coloured view of the grandiose schemes of the past,—of Dupleix's essentially Latin diplomacy, of the line of forts to hem in the English settlements to the Atlantic seaboard, of Jolliet and Marquette pushing down the great Mississippi water, of the huge Louisiana scheme which would have written "Closed" on the English chapter in America, of the empire of the Antilles that was as rich as the Dutch spice-islands, and of the grip of the barques and caravels of Dieppe on the lucrative African trade. These were the very stuff of romance,—tales of "the days when the world was wide," and when the French adventurer was a mixture of François Villon and a Jesuit father, a compound of adventurous *bonhomie* and mystic faith. Shrinking from the parochialism of the restored Bourbons and the Monarchy of July, France dreamed of the past.

This was especially the case when the peace of 1816 finally wrested most of the Empire from French hands. The Empire which had been at its zenith under Louis XIV had gone bit by bit. France had died of a virtual suicide in India, of inanition in Canada, and, in the rest of North America, from blindly refusing to face the facts of Colbert's riparian policy in Louisiana. The Seven Years' War had been the turning-point: it definitely ended the French dreams of a new Empire beyond Europe; and, from then until the conquest of Algeria, the country spoke of departed glories. History under these conditions was at once a grievance and an outlet for repressed romantic instincts. The Frenchman liked to dream, and liked to intensify his dreams by the sense of injustice under which he laboured. Hence the strength of the tradition; hence

the curiously poignant way in which this colonial question was regarded. It was on a plane of emotional intensity unknown in the England of that time ; it was a living passion, because nowhere is a tradition created as quickly as in France, and nowhere does national self-delusion on any desired theory reach such an intensity.

The tradition left over from the First Empire was thus partly a vision, partly a crystallization of the nation's wrongs. But the actual legacy was of a different kind. Here the French were on firm foundations. In the first place, they received from the First Empire certain principles and methods of colonization that were deemed to be ingrained in the French spirit and that formed part and parcel of every colonial scheme in which France has dabbled. It was never doubted, for instance, that colonization, in some vaguely metaphysical way, was an especial attribute of the French nation. "Our race is expansive," cried Louis Madelin,<sup>1</sup> and this was unhesitatingly accepted as a principle of 1789, even by those who, for economic or political reasons, would have limited colonization in practice. Expansiveness was a natural Gallican attribute : so too was the manner of that expansion,—and here we get to the root of the influence of the First Empire. This Empire bequeathed to nineteenth-century France its colonial creed,—a creed summed up in the twin dogmas of assimilation and the *Pacte Colonial*. In the same unquestioning kind of way in which they accepted the Gallican capability of colonization, the French accepted the method. Expansion was to be the expansion of France, of French civilization, of French ideas, for how could it be otherwise ? Was not colonization national proselytism ? What better fate for the Indians of Canada than to be administered under the Paris code and the details of French law ? Were not French institutions and the sacred principles of 1789 a goal greatly to be desired for races that had not progressed so far ? And was it not as logical as it was desirable that the tiniest embellishment of French civilization should be transferred to the newest settlement ? The French flag meant France ; France meant the apex of civilization ; and the duty of a civilizing nation was to proselytize. For what otherwise would be the significance of the phrase with which France described her colonies, "*La France outremer*" ? Assimilation *à outrance* was thus the most striking legacy which the first colonial Empire left to the second. Preaching abstract logic and the universalism of the *minutiae* of French life, it cast all French colonialism into a preordained mould, thus making development synonymous with artificial growth along certain prescribed lines. Assimilation in politics and law, the subordination of the *Pacte Colonial* in economics—that was the well-defined theory of the First Empire ; and it was as clearly the

<sup>1</sup> L. Madelin, *L'Expansion Française* (1918), p. 5.

theory on which the new Empire was raised, at least until 1910. Indeed, theory to the contrary, these ideas permeate many parts, if not the whole, of French colonial life even to-day.

With this went the second legacy, which can only be explained by that partial logicity which makes the Frenchman, while pledging his troth unreservedly to logic, so utterly illogical. This was a spirit of opposition to all colonization. The philosophers set the tone, and others followed without thinking, so that anti-colonialism became almost a cult in France, and one so deeply implanted that, despite utterly changed conditions, it has not yet been eradicated and is still one of the gravest menaces to the effective development of the French Empire. Voltaire commenced the attack, a line in his *Candide* containing the catchword that French Canada was only "a few acres of snow,"<sup>2</sup> not worth troubling about. Then Rousseau's humanitarianism was invoked to identify colonization with exploitation, and France was intrigued with the idyllic state of native bliss described or invented by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. Literature and philosophy were practically unanimous: and the economists, confined to the localist land-emphasis of the Physiocrats, supported them, with the exception of Quesnay and his school. There was thus a solid phalanx of anti-colonial influences in eighteenth-century France. Nor did the Revolutionary philosophers change this trend: rather did they intensify it, crying aloud with Robespierre<sup>3</sup> for the death of the colonies on the slightest pretext. Stray voices like that of Barrère urging the dependence of commerce on colonization went unheeded, and, on the whole, the attitude of Voltaire, strengthened as it was by the test of 1789, became stereotyped as the only logical and therefore orthodox opinion. Anti-colonialism came thus to be deemed not only logical and philosophical, but so obvious that the very questioning of its veracity was almost tantamount to treason to the principles of the Republic. A cause that had commenced by being logical was now based on emotion, and deemed to be so palpably clear as to admit of no cavil.

Unfortunately, Napoleon did little to clear this situation: he was too busy to devote adequate attention to the colonial problem, and his chief evolutionary importance in this regard was to crush the administrative and commercial liberty conferred on the colonies by the Revolution.<sup>4</sup> Then, after him, the restored Bourbons were not merely apathetic, but clearly opposed to colonial ventures, and, from 1815 to 1830, France was virtually without colonies.

<sup>2</sup> This much-disputed line really occurs in *Candide*, c. 23.

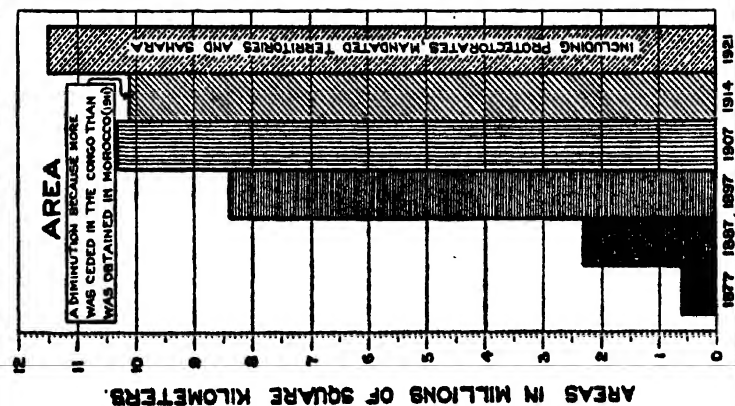
<sup>3</sup> For the actual significance of this attack (or its insignificance), see the note in Girault, 4th edition, Vol. I (1921), p. 227.

<sup>4</sup> G. Roloff, *Die Kolonialpolitik Napoleon I* (1899), or L. Deschamps, *Histoire de la Question Coloniale en France* (1891), p. 348 et seq.

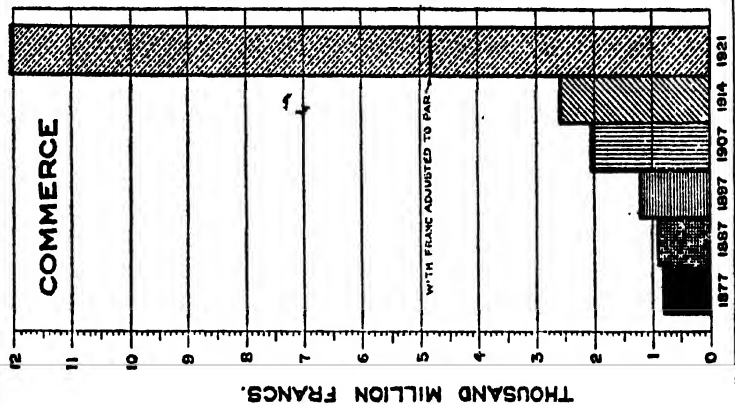
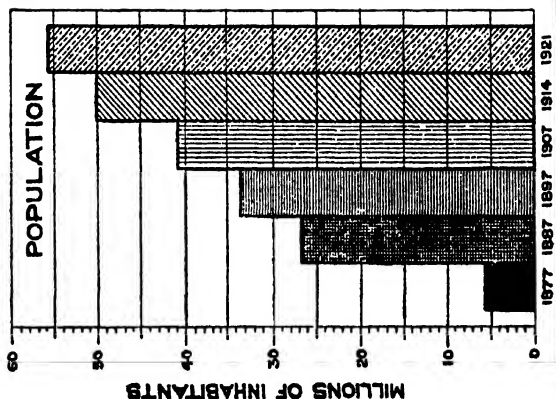
Nor did the occupation of a few coastal-posts in Algeria in 1830 lead to a changed outlook, for the dissensions caused by the annexation, and the failures of the first few decades, intensified the feeling of opposition to the colonies *per se*. France went to Algeria partly to provide some other scope than political agitation for the nation's energies, partly to restore French credit abroad, and partly to annoy England.<sup>5</sup> And she stayed there primarily because she could not evacuate and save her face, but largely because of a kind of inevitable but unwanted fatalism. For years, no decision was taken between the ideas of evacuation or limited conquest or complete occupation: France simply stood still, colonial unpopularity increasing the while. The only partisans of the colonial cause were the Midi deputies who wanted commercial expansion, the strategists who dreamed of the Mediterranean as "a French lake," and the patriots who prated of "*la gloire*." But these were in a decided minority, and, up to 1840, Parliament followed the "Agrarians," the successors of the Physiocrats, in systematically opposing colonial development. Not one economist declared in favour of colonization, except Sismondi, and his protests were unheard during the triumph of J. B. Say.<sup>6</sup> And a flippant *mot* completed the victory of the non-expansionists—that "Algeria is a rock without water, a place where only air is found, and even that is bad!"

It was little wonder, then, that there was an almost completely sterile period in the history of French colonization up to 1870; and the attitude towards Algeria (which was limited to the coastal-fringe north of Kabylie), merely proved the case. The "old colonies," dismembered fragments of the first colonial Empire, were stagnant and crushed under Napoleon's *régime* of excessive centralization, and were under naval martinets appointed by the Ministry of the Marine. The three privileged islands (Martinique, Guadeloupe and Réunion), it is true, were under "the *régime* of law," but, even in their case, the colonial assemblies had practically no power, and all administrative and financial matters were administered by and from Paris. All alike were under the *Pacte Colonial*, the analogue to the Navigation Acts of England, which had been re-established in 1802. These restrictions were supposed to go with the triumph of free-trade in France in 1861, but really, "she abolished all that was unfavourable to herself, all that favoured the colonies." Even the reform of 1866, giving the colonial councils-general the right to impose tariffs, was conceded only to Algeria and the three privileged sugar-

# THE GROWTH OF THE FRENCH EMPIRE



1877-BEFORE COMMENCEMENT OF EXPANSION.  
 1897-AFTER FERRY'S FORWARD POLICY.  
 1907-AFTER EXPANSION IN NORTH AFRICA & MADAGASCAR  
 1914 -PERIOD OF ANTI-COLONIALISM.  
 1921 -AT COMMENCEMENT OF WAR.  
 1921 -POST-WAR.





islands, and was at once regretted. On the whole, the governing principle was still the subordination of the colonies to the mother country.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, the groping experiments of the sixties, ill-defined and almost annulled as they were, had some results; and, by 1870, it was vaguely realized that some benefits might accrue to all from the development of the colonies. The new free-trade policy of France, especially after the 1860 treaties, powerfully aided this idea; and, however much the actual application of the reforms might be retarded, the very promulgation of the schemes of 1861 and 1866 anticipated the decline, the disappearance even, of the old *Pacte Colonial*. Up till then, colonists had been forbidden to buy foreign manufactured goods, or to sell their goods in foreign markets; but, in theory at least, these restrictions no longer held. It was for the new Republican government of 1871 either to make the facts conform to theory or to restore the old position.<sup>8</sup>

In 1871, the French colonies were weak and scattered units, and opinion regarding them frankly hostile, although to some extent leavened by the reform-spirit of the preceding decade.<sup>9</sup> In all, the Empire included less than a million square kilometres and five million people, and most of these were in Algeria. Even there, the boundary was uncertain; effective occupation had only gone as far as the Mitidja plain; the whole land was threatened by a revolt of Islam; and exploitation had scarcely commenced. There were certain scattered territories in the Senegal basin, but, although Faidherbe had pacified the coastal regions, the Senegal River was not yet reached. The Ivory Coast was not thought of, and a few trading-posts dragged along the steam-baked coast of Guinea and the Congo. Outside of Africa were the "old colonies," a few sugar-islands which were the prey of a labour-shortage and the competition of beet-sugar. Then there were the fragments of St. Pierre et Miquelon, a group of islands off the coast of Newfoundland; an unexplored piece of Guiana which seemed only useful as an alternative to the guillotine in getting rid of undesirables; five towns in India; the undeveloped New Caledonia and Tahiti in the Pacific, Cytherean countries which were useful for exiling the most incompetent officials; and a small hold, of a vague extent and a still vaguer security, on Cochin-China and the Mekong valley. Not one unit in this disconnected *congeries* was prospering; the trade of Cochin-China, it is true, was developing, but in foreign hands: the other colonies were either, like the Pacific islands, in a trance of inertia, or, like the sugar-colonies, rapidly declining. Their total

<sup>7</sup> L. Deschamps, *Histoire de la Question Coloniale en France* (1891), p. 372 et seq.

<sup>8</sup> Camille Guy, in *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, April, 1900, pp. 393-394.

<sup>9</sup> *Revue des Colonies et des Questions Coloniales*, No. 4, 1914, article on "Nos Colonies en 1870."

commerce amounted only to 600 million francs a year, and of this a third was in foreign hands. Yet for this privilege, France paid 30 million francs, Algeria alone receiving an annual subsidy of 22 millions! Colonization thus seemed a particularly onerous form of bounty on industry, and it was little wonder that the public viewed the colonies through the eyes of the recent Mexican catastrophe, and would readily have accepted the abandonment of all colonial ventures, had that been possible.

Under these conditions, the anti-colonial feeling in France could be easily explained. This positive revulsion has been the most important feature of French colonization; without it, the history of French expansion in the last fifty years is meaningless, for it was felt in every colony. It is the thread of unity running through the whole, and practically all events connected with colonization may be explained by it. Indeed, it is difficult nowadays to conceive the bitterness and the emotional intensity of this feeling, because colonies have never evoked in England, even in the thirties and at the time of Gladstone's "Great Betrayal" of the Transvaal, such a concerted *furor* of opposition as they have in France since 1870. The feeling has been almost a passion, and moments have not been lacking when to advocate colonization almost branded one as a traitor. Nor was it, as in England, a party matter. Liberal parochialism can explain the English ban on forward policies in the seventies, but no similar explanation on a party basis would be applicable in the case of France. There, the opposition was national, and supported by the same intensity, the same excessive passion, which France brought to the question of the Rhine. Indeed, the two issues were closely connected: an expansionist was a traitor to France on the Rhine, and the patriots wishing to reserve every ounce of France's power for Continental schemes, opposed all colonies. Practically Jules Ferry alone, and later, the military expansionists, stood aloof from the general condemnation; the consensus of opinion on the matter was literally amazing, and there was not a single colony but suffered from it.

Louis Philippe's old fight for Algeria now became almost insignificant as compared with the struggles for Tunisia and Tonkin. France delayed from 1862 to 1885 in taking Tonkin, and Dupré and Garnier, the leaders, expected repudiation and disgrace even in the case of their success. They staked their lives against failure, and, it would seem, their careers against success. Tunisia was given to France by Ferry against the country's wish, and he twice fell for the sake of the colonies. His forward policy in Tunisia led to the fall of his first ministry (November, 1881), while his Tonkin policy literally hurled his second from power (March, 1885). "The doctrine of effacement," as it was called, was in the ascendant, and Clemenceau's fervid oratory rode roughshod over the

more reasonable but less vehement advocates of colonization. Egypt was abandoned to England in 1882: for almost twenty years, Wargla and Tuggurt marked the limit imposed on Algerian expansion at the edge of the desert: and there was a standstill in West Africa until the move against Bamako in 1893. All through the eighties and well on into the next decade, this feeling lasted and even grew stronger, although the unrestrained ebullience of 1884, when the issue was given over to the crowd-psychology of the mobs swarming into the precincts of Parliament, could not last.<sup>10</sup> Still, the Tonkin disgust remained in the air, and he who advocated colonization automatically became a political outcast, either so obtuse that he could not perceive facts, or so idealistic that he would lose himself in a world of desire, and in either case, according to the prevalent opinion, incapable of deciding France's destinies. Under these conditions, a speech on colonization came to be either a sign of bravado or a method of intimating that political advancement had no charm for the speaker! No ambitious politician could afford to ally himself to the colonial cause, and not many men had the disinterested pertinacity of a Ferry.

By 1891, thought on the colonies had narrowed down to attacks on Tonkin and the Sudan, both of which were taken as apt illustrations of the results of colonization. The commercial crises in the former, and the deficits and constant wars in the latter, had disgusted the French anew with colonies, and keen opposition was manifested to the inevitable movements back from the coast which were then looming into prominence. Four years later, Madagascar shared similar criticisms and was hampered by similar half-policies which were far worse for all concerned than a complete abstention. Then, when the pressure of events made an onward move in North Africa inevitable, the country still stood aloof and condemnatory.<sup>11</sup> Individuals acted as individuals, suffering both in the case of success and failure; and, even when the facts of the situation made the policy of frank obstruction no longer tenable, there still remained a negative and inert hostility. Thus, the conquest of Mauretania and Wadai in 1909 was practically concealed from the public, for colonial expansion was still looked on as something like a rash,—annoying, if no longer positively dangerous.<sup>12</sup> Even the penetration of Morocco was practically prevented until 1912 by similar attitudes, and hampered even after that.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, as Gautier sums up, "there has never been

<sup>10</sup> Deschamps (1891), *op. cit.*, pp. xiii-xiv.

<sup>11</sup> Long debate in *Journal Officiel*, *Deps.*, 3/7/00, opposing the occupation of Tuat.

<sup>12</sup> Interpellation in *Journal Officiel*, *Deps.*, 24-25/12/10, and Morel's reply.

<sup>13</sup> Compare the Jaurès interpellation in *Journal Officiel*, *Deps.*, 17/6/11, or Senate, 15/6/11.

an epoch or a country more profoundly indifferent to distant adventures " than the third French Republic, and, by a curious paradox, " the country sees its aversion for colonies and its overseas Empire grow at the same time, by a parallel progression." <sup>14</sup> Hence arises the curious fact that the most marked tendency in the history of French colonial expansion has clearly been a profound anti-colonialism.

The fact of the existence of this tendency is undoubted : its explanation is a more difficult matter, because the explanations fall short of explaining the high pitch of the opposition and the *furor* of bitterness directed against the colonies. Apathy could be understood, what baffles analysis is the direct and positive anathema, especially when the economic considerations after 1900 all pointed directly to the contrary. The trouble was that the colonial question was viewed as indissolubly linked up with the recovery of the lost Rhine provinces : in fact, as has been pointed out, it was deemed to be part of the same problem and to know no separate existence, and indeed this attitude still unconsciously colours much discussion of colonial activities in France. The Treaty of Frankfurt naturally kept French activities in a Continental groove, and, as colonies were supposed to dissipate rather than increase the country's resources, anyone wanting expansion was viewed as Germanophile. From this point of view, then, any wastage of economic resources or man-power in distant colonial ventures, perhaps on a par with the Mexican expedition or Napoleon III's scheme for an Arab kingdom, would not only be ill-advised, but tantamount to high-treason. It was treachery to advocate colonization. Gambetta spoke of " the road of revenge," conscripts sang Déroulède's *Chants du Soldat*, and Clemenceau, with a charming lack of humour, denounced colonialism as " only a policy of national chauvinism." <sup>15</sup> *Revanche* was the keynote of the seventies, and, for the colonies, to use the catchword of the day, this meant *recueillement* or withdrawal. <sup>16</sup> A pursual of both ends simultaneously was not deemed possible, and, if there had to be a choice between them, why, argued the Frenchman, past history, the existing position of France, and the dubious nature of the advantages promised by the Ferry school all pointed in the same direction. " You will end by making me think you prefer Alsace-Lorraine to France. Must we hypnotize ourselves with the lost provinces, and should we not take compensations elsewhere ? " protested Ferry to Déroulède, perhaps the most bitter of the Continentalists. " That is just the point," retorted

<sup>14</sup> E. F. Gautier, *La Conquête du Sahara* (3rd edition, 1922), p. 39.

<sup>15</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 1/11/83.

<sup>16</sup> Valet (1924), *op. cit.*, p. 232 ; J. Despagne, *La Diplomatie de la Troisième République et le Droit des Gens* (1904), p. 120.

the fiery poet, admirably expressing French opinion. "I have lost two children, and you offer me twenty domestics!"<sup>17</sup> Clearly, with such a frame of mind in the ascendant, colonization was a closed book. France, in the seventies and eighties, was thus suffering from acute national myopia, and, seeing only the "blue line of the Vosges," was blind to the world-movements that were transforming the position of the colonies, both economically and politically. *Revanche*, however logical in 1871, was no longer so pertinent to the position of 1881, and, at the later stage, lacked in reason what it had in emotion.

A second reason for the ban on colonization was the reaction against the high-flown ventures of the Second Empire. "The Empire has satiated the country with adventures," complained Ferry,<sup>18</sup> and Tonkin and Tunis sounded as badly in French ears as Mexico or Sebastopol. France could see no economic or political gains to be obtained from colonization, and the quest of "glory" alone had palled. The people wanted a steady internal development, concentrating power and strength for the Rhine-fight alone, but above all building up national prosperity again, on an industrial basis.

This tendency, coinciding as it did with the popular psychology of the time, was supported by the economists. Say, Molinari, de Laveleye,—in short, every economist of note except Leroy-Beaulieu, agreed on this point,—that colonization was an unjustifiable expense, a burden for future and present alike. "A great colonial development is a luxury, the costly fantasy of a great nation," the Duc de Broglie told the Senate in 1884, and unless the country was overflowing with prosperity would ruin both colony and mother-country. The *Journal des Economistes*, under Frederick Passy, showed how much of an economic blunder such dispersion of an ordinary nation's wealth was, and how little return could be hoped for. Then, the left benches, the Socialists, added the loud weight of their opposition, making colonization a crime against the liberty of mankind as well as an attribute of the moderates, and thus doubly damned. So that there was a practical uniformity on this question, although for various reasons. But, whatever the reason, most people thought that colonies were expensive, useless, unproductive, directly weakening, and somewhat immoral, and, all in all, if good at all, operated on the colonizing nation like drugs on an individual,—for the passing zest, payment had to be made by an ultimate disintegration.

Such a feeling, however, could not be uninfluenced by, even should it resist, the world-changes of the eighties; and gradually, although the general outlook towards the colonies continued to be as antagonistic as

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in G. P. Gooch, *Franco-German Relations, 1871-1914* (1923), p. 21.

<sup>18</sup> J. Ferry, *Les Affaires de Tunisie* (2nd edition, 1882), p. 3.

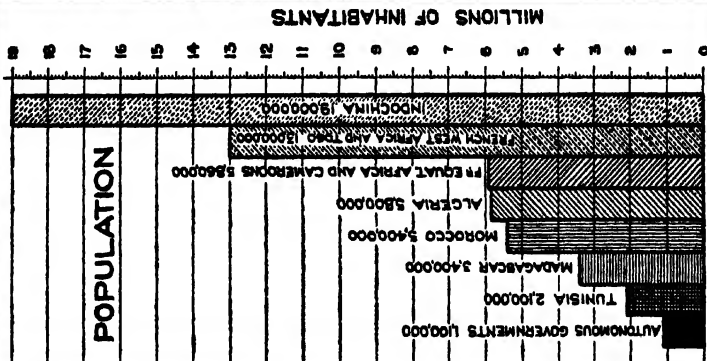
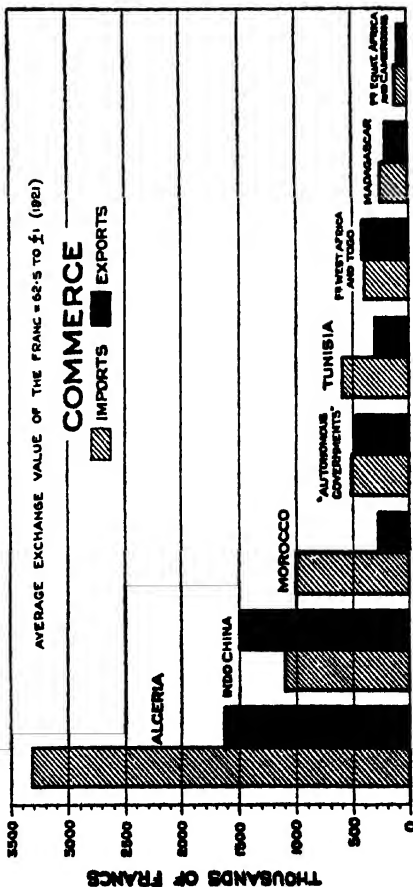
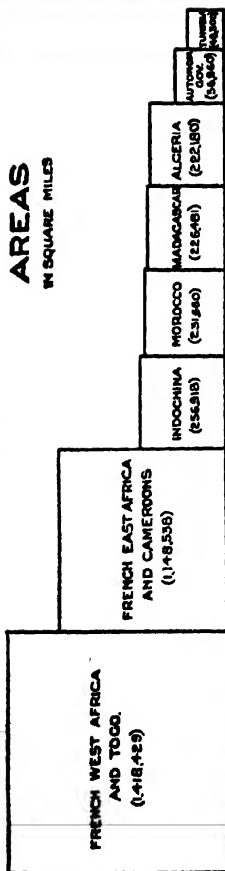
ever, a more comprehensive attitude was forced on the country, as a result of which expansion came to be tolerated even if still viewed as undesirable. The rule remained the same: but exceptions were permitted. The change to this attitude was the work of Jules Ferry, "Ferry the Tonkinese," "Ferry the Traitor," who was sacrificed, even to the extent of his life, before the prevailing anti-colonial monomania. If the modern French Empire can be said to have been the work of any one man, that man is surely Jules Ferry. A grave and somewhat cold Lorrainer, he was a fighter all his life. Solid, stoical, reserved, he stood for moral force and for a methodical obstinacy in fighting through to his ends. He was never a showy orator like his rival Gambetta, that gesticulating Meridional who always had his heart in his hands. In short, he was as much a man of the Assembly as Gambetta was a mover of the crowds.<sup>19</sup> Ferry stood coldly aloof from attacks of Press and people and politicians, and simply continued his work. All the time he was opposed: papers and mobs alike condemned him for betraying France to Germany, and for weakening the frontier by taking men to fight Asiatics and Africans in distant colonial ventures. The Chamber of Deputies was constantly fluctuating, more often than not against him, and he had an enemy in the President, Jules Grévy, who was openly opposed to all colonial, and even diplomatic, movements. In Parliament, practically every outstanding figure of the day ridiculed him and his cause, and even Gambetta's allegiance was unstable, being rather to pave a way for himself than to help Ferry. The Monarchists naturally held aloof; Clemenceau preached the old "doctrine of effacement" and the Continental view-point for the Socialists; Joseph Fabre invoked the principles of '89 to prevent the exploitation of free savage communities; and Camille Pelletan denied to civilized people the right "to impose civilization on others at the cannon-mouth." The result was that the Right and the extreme Left always opposed Ferry, and, in crucial moments, many of the moderates.

Yet he kept on, and for the first time in France, gave colonization a philosophy, and, more, gave the country the actual bases of its new colonial Empire. Tunisia and Tonkin were conquered under him, despite Parliament and the country, and the foundations laid for the occupation of Madagascar and a forward policy in West Africa. Ferry took up the isolated fragments of the French Empire, added new elements, and shook the whole into a co-ordinated unity with a policy for the moment and a plan for the future. As Hanotaux summed up his work in 1898, "with a clear conscience of the past and a precise view of the future, and having considered the times and our strength, he fixed the four

<sup>19</sup> A. Rambaud, *Jules Ferry* (1903), p. 509 *et seq.*

# COMPARATIVE POSITION OF THE FRENCH COLONIES

## AREAS IN SQUARE MILES



points which henceforth determined the four-fold ideal of our colonial domain,—Tunisia, Tonkin, Congo, Madagascar. In less than fifteen years, a new Empire was written there.”<sup>20</sup> In a word, he made France the second colonial power of the world, where formerly she could scarcely vie with Portugal.

Even more important than his actual achievements, however, was his colonial philosophy, for, on this, French practice was moulded for decades.<sup>21</sup> In essence, it was a philosophy based on economics, and it must always be remembered that this was an almost unknown method of approach in the eighties. Ferry saw that the world was changing, and that the opening of Africa and the Far East was involving a completely new orientation of affairs,—a new state in which the Sudan and the Mekong had to be considered as well as the Rhine. On the other hand, he demonstrated how this unveiling of hitherto closed lands coincided with a new need of such outlets. France was becoming industrialized, and Ferry insisted that this was the most important fact in French existence, and not any hysterical raving about lost provinces: *revanche* might be a laudable desire, but it was the changing position and demands of industry that were the vital features of the situation, and to concentrate on mere emotionalism meant a positive betrayal of the country's real interests. France, willy-nilly, was becoming increasingly industrialized: industrialization obviously meant increased production: increased production could only be maintained if the products were sold: therefore, the trend of evolution being what it was, France had to have markets. “Markets, outlets,” were the bases on which Ferry erected the colonial policy of France.

“Is it not clear,” he asked, “that, for all the great powers of modern Europe, since their industrial power commenced, there is posed an immense and difficult problem, which is the basis of industrial life, the very condition of existence,—the question of ‘markets’? Have you not seen the great industrial nations one by one arrive at a colonial policy? And can we say that this colonial policy is a lunacy for modern nations? Not at all, *Messieurs*, this policy is, for all of us, a necessity, like the ‘market’ itself.”<sup>22</sup>

It will be seen that Ferry's theory rested on four elements which were to him indissolubly connected, namely industrialization, protection, markets, and colonies. The new *régime* was obviously one of industrialization *à outrance*; the maintenance, and even the introduction, of this was impossible without rigid protection (witness Germany and the

<sup>20</sup> Ferry's *Collected Speeches*, Vol. IV, p. 482.

<sup>21</sup> Outlined in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 12/10/83, 28/3/84, 29/7/85, and Senate, 12/12/84.

<sup>22</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Senate, 12/11/84. Cp. Etienne in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 2/12/91.



United States); and even this would not suffice unless provision were made to dispose of the produce; and, with every nation becoming more and more an economic world unto itself and separating itself from its neighbours by tariff-walls, the only available and certain markets were those of the colonies. That was the sequence from industrial development to colonization, and that was why, to the Ferry school, industry could not really expand and the country could not become self-sufficient unless colonial development went on *pari passu*. The two were linked together, and, in the post-1870 world at least, the development of the one could not take place without a corresponding development of the other. The four bases of Ferry's policy were thus rather regarded the inter-dependent parts of an organism, than as accidentally related and separable policies flung into one theory at Ferry's desire. relation was organic rather than fortuitous.

The United States and Germany were both evolving industrial systems on a protectionist basis, and France had to follow suit or fall back. Already, her traditional market in South America was being undermined, and already her agriculture was menaced by more cheaply produced cereals from the newer regions of the world. The signs were clear for him who would read. Hence, the trend was clearly in the direction of industrialization at home, and the development of markets in the colonies. France, with a declining man-power, had no men available for extensive colonial ventures, so that, if colonization meant emigration from the mother-country, it was a will-o'-the-wisp so far as France was concerned. But Ferry insisted that, in the new world of industry, and with the temperate colonies of the world already annexed, colonization was no longer a transplantation of settlers. "I have often said that there is no need to have a surplus population in order to colonize: an excess of capital will suffice."<sup>23</sup> Colonization now meant "spheres of influence" in tropical lands rather than *colonies de peuplement* for settlement, and so what was demanded was not an outlet for emigration, but for industries, export, capital. "It is a new form of colonization," he said in the final exposition of his policy in July, 1885, "suitable for peoples who have either a mass of available capital or an excess of products"; and went on to say that a country which allowed large numbers of its nationals to go abroad was not in an enviable position.

A colony to France was thus a *market*, both for manufactured goods and for the redundant capital of France. It was a necessary element in rounding-off the self-sufficiency of the world-within-a-world which the protectionist system abroad made necessary in France. The old free-trade ideas of 1860 no longer pertained: the new world was one of

<sup>23</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 3/3/88; or *Collected Speeches*, Vol. V, p. 131.

tariff-boundaries and economic self-sufficiency, and the whole structure, if not providing for outlets, and for the constant employment of the man-power of France in France itself and for the utilization of all French capital either in France or the colonies, would be top-heavy. Raw materials were not once mentioned by Ferry; in the eighties of last century, not even a Ferry could envisage a shortage of primary products. He took the raw materials and the capacity for manufacturing them for granted; what concerned him was lest the whole industrial machine might be stopped for lack of outlets, might suffer from congestion at the distributing end. The problem was not to make the goods but to sell them: and so a sufficiently large colonial Empire, by ensuring this, would impart the necessary stability and certainty to the whole of French economic life. Given the premises of the eighties, Ferry's arguments were logically unassailable, and his remedy attractively simple. The only difficulty was that the premises changed so rapidly,—with rubber and cotton, for instance.

In Ferry's theory, the definitely new points were the economic *motif* of colonization and the stress on the economic interdependence of mother-country and colony. Especially clear was his linking of the protectionist system and colonization through the common-term of industrialization. As he said, "The protectionist system is like a steam-boiler without a safety-valve, unless it has a healthy and serious colonial policy as a corrective and auxiliary"; and, in a still more famous slogan, "The colonial policy of the Third Republic is the offspring of her industrial policy."<sup>24</sup> European consumption was satiated, and more, it was diminishing in so far as France was concerned, with the growth of protectionism: only the colonies remained. Colonization therefore was becoming interpreted as more and more of an economic nature. Eugene Etienne, the Under-Secretary of State who built up the colonial organization, went even further than his master Ferry in emphasizing this point, for he said that all colonization had economics as the sole goal, and demanded,—“in the presence of that economic movement which has come out of America and which can neither be combated nor denied, and which to-day is invading the whole of Europe, what are you going to do with your products if you can no longer export them?”<sup>25</sup> As a result of this new stress, a solid colonial *bloc* came to be formed, largely inspired by the cotton industrialists who stood against the popular outcry, and, as early as 1889, planned railway-extensions in the Red River country of Indo-China and examined the possibilities of the newly-conquered Sudan.

Even the economists, for so long the most hostile opponents of all

<sup>24</sup> J. Ferry, *Le Tonkin et la Mère-Patrie* (1890), pp. 40, 42.

<sup>25</sup> *Journal Officiel*, *Deps.*, 2/12/91, p. 2381.

colonial ventures, seemed to be turning round in the late eighties. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, the Ferry of the economists, who, if not the most profound, was at least the most assertive of them, had published the first edition of *De la Colonisation chez les Peuples Modernes* in 1874,—the first great work of colonial vulgarization in France. Though he tended unduly to decry the lack of French organization, he yet pled for the general cause of colonization. "Colonization is for France a matter of life or death. Either France becomes a great African Power, or in a century or two, she will be a secondary European Power, and will count in the world little more than Greece or Rumania counts in Europe." Gide joined him in emphasizing that colonization was rather a question of duty than of interest, and, savouring though this did of the old concept that colonies merely meant added responsibilities, it yet helped. In addition, John Stuart Mill's statement that the foundation of colonies was the best work in which the capital of an old country could engage was freely quoted. Economic theory was thus changing on this matter, and the economists did not confine themselves to abstract theory alone. They invoked statistics to clinch their points, and to show that France positively had to look outside Europe. The gradual diminution of her exports (from 4,518 million francs in 1876 to 4,281 millions in 1886, despite the industrialization in the interim) was a prediction of what would be her fate if she raised no colonial markets, and the comparison was the more poignant because the figures related to the free-trade period, whereas, since 1880, the tariff-policy had converted economic Europe into a series of armed camps, and both intensified the competition and shut off certain markets from France.

But Ferry did not rely on the economic argument alone. He also stressed the imperious political necessity of colonization for France. The widening of the stage which decided the balance of power in the world after 1870 could not be neglected; France had to advance in order to stand still in comparison with other Powers. Hence, quite apart from the economic benefits to be derived from colonization, and even if colonization directly entailed large losses, there were adequate motives. Europe had outgrown Europe, and France had to take cognizance of the wider stage. The navy had to have new *points d'appui*, now that China and Africa and Tahiti were within its orbit, for wars now were caused in Samoa and the Nile Valley and the Indian frontier as much as in the Baltic or the Balkans. "And that is why Tunisia, Saigon, and Cochin-China were necessary, that is why we need Madagascar, and why we are at Diégo-Suarez (Madagascar) and will never leave them!" cried Ferry in the Deputies in July, 1885.<sup>26</sup> To abstain from the forward

<sup>26</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Depts., 29/7/85.

movement, especially in the name of the short-sighted chauvinism of "revenge" on Germany, would under the circumstances be self-annulling, a bankruptcy of French rights, he argued in effect: it would mean a new treaty of 1763 and a kindred humiliation, without the excuse of Rosbach and the Pompadour. "The blue line of the Vosges!"—he cried the catchword of his opponents in contempt.<sup>27</sup> No: "it is neither in the Mediterranean nor the Channel that the decisive battle will take place, and Marseilles and Toulon will be defended quite as much in the China Seas as in the Mediterranean," ran his swan-song in 1885. Colonization, in short, had a political as well as an economic background.

There Ferry's theory stopped. It never got beyond protection and colonial markets to the issues of raw materials and the best form of colonial development: it was a fighting theory of origins rather than one of development, and considered the precursory stage and the ultimate goal rather than the actual means of colonization. But, despite its limitations, it was a coherent and reasoned doctrine, a doctrine that France had hitherto completely lacked. In short, Ferry gave the expansionists a theory, the tenets of which they unhesitatingly followed till the close of the century. His was the cohesive force during the period of the acquisition of new colonies in the nineties, and thus served its purpose. When actual organization and the *minutiae* of colonization became questions of moment in the ensuing decade, Ferry's theory was a little antiquated, but, after all, it was avowedly only for the period of origins.

When the theory was exploded with the brusqueness of a bombshell in the midst of the anti-colonial France of the eighties, it received the reception that one would expect. To an almost uncomprehending silence at first, there succeeded a veritable *Jehad* of indignant expostulation, ending only with Ferry's political martyrdom and death. His theory was the political scandal in the interlude between the war and Boulangism, and he was twice overthrown. The Conservatives, the Radical party, the Press, and later the Boulangists all opposed him, and he became the most unpopular man in France.

On March 30, 1885, the occasion of his second fall, occurred the most spectacular scene in the history of French colonization. The previous day, there had been a panic in Paris when news came through of General de Negrier's defeat at Langson in Indo-China and the threatened evacuation even of the Delta region, the last post of the French. The next day, crowds of several thousands pressed against the gates of the Palais-Bourbon, crying, "*À mort Ferry!*" and working themselves up into a general Carmagnole frame of mind; and, within, the scene beggared

<sup>27</sup> E.g. in preface to *Le Tonkin et la Mère-Patrie*, 1st edition, 1882.

description. Ferry, standing against the storm, declared that the true enemies were not the pirates of Loch-Nam, not the outlaws of the Cho-Moi gorges, but those who had reduced the majority for the Tonkin vote to three, and had cut down the necessary credits. The back benches, and not the Black-Flags of Indo-China, were France's foes. He read Brière de L'Isle's despatch announcing the defeat, but deprecated the panic and the mob-tumult. After him, Clemenceau at once arose and, with the full approval of the House, hurled at Ferry the statement: "We can enter into no discussion with you. We have no longer Ministers before us, but men charged with *high-treason*, on whom if the principles of justice still exist, the hand of the law will soon swoop!" The vote immediately afterwards was 306 to 149 against Ferry: and the menace of the mobs came nearer, and the voices crying his death penetrated the very Chamber.<sup>28</sup>

March 30, 1885, was clearly the nadir of colonization in France. So Ferry fell, and, falling, kept secret news that would have fully vindicated himself, but which, disclosed at that juncture and in that fashion, would have hindered, and probably wrecked, the negotiations then proceeding on the Chinese frontier. He remained isolated on the fringe of the Republican party, he was defeated for the Presidency, he was shot at in the corridor of the Chamber, he was insulted as "Le Tonkinois" whenever he appeared in public, and in the elections of 1889 was even defeated by a Boulangist. Not till 1891 did his ostracism end and the Vosges electors send him back to the Senate; but he died, worn out, if vindicated, early in 1893.<sup>29</sup> He had paid the ultimate price. France sometimes decrees that a statesman has deserved well of his country; more often she crucifies him. But Ferry needed no formal adulation, for the nature of his work was best shown in the very sites of his statues, at Saint-Die, Tunis and Haiphong. "*Ferry le Traître*" was the first of the French colonials, the creator of the French Empire—that Empire in which the great forward movement was starting all along the front in the very year of his death.

But it was some time before his sacrifices bore fruit, for France in the years after 1885 was whirling back in a storm of Continentalism. "The vote of March 30 was the condemnation not only of the greatest living French statesman, but of the principle which had guided the policy of France since the Congress of Berlin." The result was that the next six years were negative ones in so far as colonial expansion was concerned. But the foundations were being laid for the great onrush of the nineties. Eugene Etienne, the Under-Secretary for the Colonies

<sup>28</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 31/3/85.

<sup>29</sup> A. Gaisman, *L'Œuvre de la France en Tonkin* (1904), p. 77.





from 1887 to 1892, was orientating and fixing the principles of French colonial policy, and, although the Deputies were "surprised and alarmed" and public opinion "still badly prepared to accept them," he outlined the empire-schemes that events were tending towards in Africa. Speaking in a famous speech of May, 1890, on the subject of the Dahomey expedition, and answering the anti-colonial interpellation, he definitely postulated the fact that France had not only a series of trading-posts in Africa but an African Empire. He made France see the unity and cohesion of her African efforts, and stood for concerted action as against the *petits paquets* or desultory efforts of the previous decades. Ignoring the jeers of the Right, but supported by the Centre and moderate Left, he claimed the whole of the *hinterland* as, or as becoming, French. He thus reduced Ferry's generalizations to a concrete programme, and fixed the course of French activities in Africa for the ensuing years.

"If you drop a line from the Tunisian border past Lake Chad to the Congo, you can say that most of the territories between that line and the sea, excepting Morocco and the English, German and Portuguese coastal possessions hidden in the immense circumference, are either French or are destined to enter within the French sphere of influence. We have there a vast and immense domain which is ours to colonize and to make fruitful; and I think that, at this time, taking into account the world-wide movement of expansion, at the same time as foreign markets are closing against us, and we ourselves are thinking of our own market, I think, I repeat, that it is wise to look to the future and reserve to French commerce and industry those outlets which are open to her in the colonies and by the colonies."<sup>30</sup>

Obvious as this may seem now, it was a unique conception in the France of 1890 to visualize an Empire from the Chad to the sea and the Congo to the Mediterranean, and even to postulate any unified plan, still less a constant forward-movement based on the economic *motif* alone. It was singularly fortunate that France, at this crucial moment, had as the guiding force of colonial organization a man with a definite policy and a determination to advocate that policy in the face of strenuous opposition.

This year, 1890, may be taken as the definite turning-point in the history of France's second colonial Empire, in that it marked the commencement of a really constructive interest in colonial questions. Etienne's "Advisory Colonial Council" amply demonstrated this, impossible as such a conception would have been even five years before. The previous period of stagnation, of retreat even, had known no such interest, and it was only the Boulangist adventure and the Panama scandal that attracted public notice. Where colonial progress was

<sup>30</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 11/5/90, p. 750. See *L'Afrique Française*, Nov., 1907, p. 403, for article on "Etienne."



mentioned, as in the case of the Sudanese venture, it was only to be assailed. Now, however, when the violence of the Ferry epoch had subsided, and the problem could be approached with clearer minds on the part of the politicians and a kind of jaded acquiescence by the public, progress was possible. To the old positive hostility, a more or less uneasy mistrust had succeeded, but it at least allowed of some expansion.<sup>31</sup> The new period thus niggardly allowed was by the pressure of facts largely one of military expeditions,—in Dahomey, Sudan, Timbuktu, Chad, Madagascar, and Upper Tonkin,—and the spectacular shattering of native kingdoms at least associated an element of the always desired “glory” with colonization.<sup>32</sup>

But it would be unjust to characterize this period as solely military : it is true that the colonies now began to be looked on as a school for military training and that the military were amongst the keenest exponents of expansion ; but, over and above this, there were so many expeditions because the extent of territory conquered was so vast, and because in every case, powerful native kingdoms, organized almost entirely on a predatory fighting basis, were in the way. It was inevitable, therefore, that colonization in the nineties should partake of a military flavour, but all the time it was clearly realized that there was, in addition, the economic side. Indeed, in the minds of those who directed colonial evolution, there was no doubt but that the soldier was merely the forerunner of the trader and exploiter. After the patrol, and without it if possible, came the *entrepreneurs*. “We must push the traders to the front,” argued Etienne, in the Deputies in 1891, and must emphasize pacific missions like those of Monteil and Binger in West Africa. “*La Politique Coloniale*” (that is, the economic conception of Ferry and Etienne) was in the ascendant, as against “the policy of abstention” of the seventies and “the policy of colonial conservation” (implying a standing-still as against expansion) of the eighties. Instead of the negative and unprogressive features of former policies, a reasoned optimism was to be found.<sup>33</sup>

It is true that, until about 1894, this was hindered by the triumph of the Continental ideas of Clemenceau and Déroulède, but the alliance with Russia (1892) and a new *détente* with Germany (1894), by provoking a sense of security, allowed a turn again to the colonies. This was especially the case when Gabriel Hanotaux entered his memorable term of office at the Quai d’Orsay in 1894, because he followed Ferry in believing that, not only was colonial development inevitable, but actually profit-

<sup>31</sup> G. Hanotaux, *Fachoda* (1909), pp. 229, 72.

<sup>32</sup> Related in full in P. Gaffarel, *Notre expansion coloniale en Afrique* (1918), chap. 4 *et seq.*

<sup>33</sup> Ferry in preface to 2nd edition of *Le Tonkin et la Mère-Patrie* (1890), pp. 38-41.

able and strengthening to the power concerned. Accordingly, he sponsored a forward policy in northern and central Africa and in Madagascar, and these years (1894-1898) saw the most continuous advance in all parts of the French colonial Empire. The spirit of Ferry's expansion of 1884-1885 was now accepted as directing the movement of French colonization, and there was a steady advance and colonization. These ideas held until the rudder again went to Clemenceau's hand (1906-1909). That vigorous theorist, inflexibly opinionated as he was, was throughout the embittered foe of French colonization.

In the interim, thought on colonial policy was crystallizing in various directions. That colonization was inevitable now seemed beyond dispute: that it was "an imperious duty," to use Etienne's phrase, was not so certain: that it was a wise move economically and politically was believed at least by the directing minds, and, owing to the propaganda of bodies like the "Committee of French Africa" from 1891 on, by a widening circle of outsiders. And, most significant of all, it was coming to be believed that colonization was a supplement to, rather than an antagonist of, the prized theory of "continental solidarity," the parties of the Duc de Broglie<sup>34</sup> and of Clemenceau notwithstanding. Beyond that, there was practically a consensus of opinion that colonization should pay, whether it actually did so or not. No attention was paid to the question of the development of the colonies as individual entities: that was simply unthinkable in the nineties: they were pieces in the wider organism and their sole function was to strengthen France and to serve her needs. They had to develop along the lines France needed, they had to sacrifice themselves if need be for France. "France, which has sacrificed so many lives and so many millions to obtain privileged markets, and which only consented to the sacrifices under this promise, has the right to control the improvement of colonial cultures and industries"—so ran the official history. Again, "the colonies can enrich themselves in selling us cotton, instead of ruining us in making cotton goods."<sup>35</sup> The subservience of the colony to the motherland in every way was thus unquestioned, and France was enforcing the colonial theory that England employed in 1660. In fact, she was building up a gigantic tariff-union, a huge *Zollverein*, with the parts completely secondary to the centre.

As a result of this clearly perceived theory and the consistent forward policy in practice, the French Empire expanded by leaps and bounds. The million square kilometres of 1870 had become 8½ millions by 1914, and the colonial population had gone from five to 50 millions. France

<sup>34</sup> E.g., in *Journal Officiel*, Senate, 12/12/84.

<sup>35</sup> Dubois et Terrier, *Un Siècle d'Expansion coloniale* (1902), p. 396.

was the second colonial Power in the world, and, if the Atlantic-Indian Ocean dream had been shattered by the *débâcle* of Marchand at Fashoda, the Congo-Mediterranean policy was realizing itself more completely every day, and the separate colonies were becoming merged in the wider unity of French Africa. Already by 1906, when the reaction became noticed, conquest and organization had proceeded entirely across the Sahara, and with offshoots as far apart as Wadai and Mauretania. The whole was being galvanized into unity, and consolidation was taking the place of military conquest. Railway missions and economic surveys were replacing military patrols, and it was Binger rather than Marchand who set the model.

But another swing of the pendulum was due, and another of the kaleidoscopic changes, so typical of French activities, was about to take place. Just as the period of abstention had given way to Ferry's unrestrained optimism, and just as the following stagnant period had faded into the forward policy of 1894-1906, so the latter gave way to a reaction on diametrically opposed lines, a reaction which lasted until 1914. The causes were easy to find, quite apart from Clemenceau's Continentalism. The very intensity of the expansionist period had been such as could not endure. France had gone too rapidly, and the bewildered people called for a breathing-space, a stock-taking, a period of revising results. France began to inquire into her colonial position, as it stood after the conquests of the former period; and, appalled by the immensity of the task of consolidating the results achieved, gave way once more to pessimism on colonial matters. Naturally, the actual achievement did not tally with the unduly sanguine experiences of the preceding period, and the undoubted advances were hidden behind the more obvious faults. These faults, being in the fore, were taken to represent the whole situation, and, although a clear perception of the evil features was in the long run beneficial as aiding a solution of the problems, a presentation of faults *en masse* naturally engendered a disgruntled attitude.

In the first place, there had been too much activity, and, because France had forced the pace, it had been too military. The success of force in West Africa had placed a premium on its use elsewhere; and it had come to be accepted as a necessary concomitant of colonial activity, despite the experience of Galliéni in Madagascar. Colonization thus tended to become a synonym for a training in arms, and activity came to centre round Ahmadou in the Senegal, Samory on the Upper Niger, the Touareg in the desert, Rabah in Wadai, Behanzin in Dahomey, and the pirates in Tonkin. Conquest had to be the first phase of the situation, given a concerted native resistance; but, by the very prominence it obtained, it tended to lose its relatively insignificant place in the colonizing



a logical plan nor a premeditated policy of colonization.<sup>38</sup> Thus it came about that her action was one of *petits paquets*, the policy so much attacked by Hubert and Sarraut and the other post-war reformers. The colonies were divided between three ministers; there was no co-ordination between them, or any guiding principles to correlate their scattered activities; and France did not even have a uniform Moslem policy.

This incoherence could be readily explained. In the forefront of the causal factors was the perpetual hostility, which existed even in the expansionist period, although perforce somewhat veiled. This was so great that it was necessary to present colonial projects as a *fait accompli* in each case: every forward move in the Sahara, for instance, was taken by individual initiative, almost by chance. The hazard of circumstances and the personality of the man on the spot were the deciding factors: Paris either coldly sanctioned the result or cashiered the person responsible. Further, even if the rulers of the Colonial Office approved of a unified policy, they were hampered by political conditions. After Etienne left the Colonial Office in 1895, France seemed never to have a department the policy of which was made consistent and permanent by non-political heads: on the contrary, the general policy, and even the details, became dependent on the multitudinous political changes. As a result, policy became, not only bewilderingly contradictory, but curiously anæmic. It was pointed out that, because of the direct dependence on politics, colonial representatives, who naturally wanted favours, were always ministerialists. Not till 1910 did the colonial budgets evoke even the faintest enthusiasm, for, as the budget-reporter of 1911 said, France had "no colonial policy worthy of the name," and, as the policy lacked vitality or even existence, there was nothing to discuss!<sup>39</sup> The policy, such as did exist, was one of hesitations and variations and contradictions, and it was a good comment of the situation that the Minister of the Colonies, who looked after about a third of the colonies, was chiefly engaged in such matters as naming streets in Réunion or choosing fire-lieutenants for the Antilles! There was no order, no spontaneity,—in a word, no policy. "It is abundantly clear that France has no colonial programme, and that, in maintaining this negative attitude, she is faithful to a tradition. She has no programme, and has never had one."<sup>40</sup>

However, there was still another reason for this, quite distinct from

<sup>38</sup> Isaac, in *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National, Paris, 1889-1890*, Vol. I, p. 15.

<sup>39</sup> Viollette in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 4/4/11, and debates on the next three days. This is summarized in the colonial budget-report for 1911, Part I.

<sup>40</sup> C. Régismanset, *Questions Coloniales: 1912-1923* (1923), Vol. II, p. 232, or *Questions Coloniales: 1900-1912*, pp. 128-129.

the anti-colonialism and the undue dependence on fluctuating political conditions; and here one gets to the fundamental paradox in French colonization. France lacked a practical policy because facts were sacrificed to certain inapplicable general principles. Relying on the general principles of '89, she carried "the excessive logic of her spirit" to the colonies, and, considering the general philosophical truths to the neglect of the facts of the situation, achieved results that were fundamentally illogical.<sup>41</sup> It was not logical to apply the generalizations of Jean-Jacques to settle a problem of matriarchal land-tenure in New Caledonia, or a complicated Bambaré marriage-custom, or religious issues connected with the Moslem foundations in Tunisia: yet that is just what France did. In reality, the procedure was the reverse of logical. A principle from another sphere simply *could* not be applied to the numerous problems of colonial administration: it was quite inapposite, and moreover, inflexible. Sacrificing to the fetish of an all-embracing principle, France thus came to regulate her colonial affairs by no principle at all. The theoretically rational was to them the arbiter of everything, whereas, in reality, in dealing with native races, the rationalism of the eighteenth-century Encyclopædists is likely, indeed certain, to hinder any compromise that would be the practically logical solution of the question. That was the fault; the French would not compromise, and the existing illogicalities of native organization had to go. To introduce something logical from the French point of view, everything logical to the native had to be destroyed, the good with the bad. It was the same with political and economic organizations,—both of them based on the idea of assimilation to France. France tried to make the most complicated acts conform to the reasonings of the simplest syllogisms, and the result was anarchy, in so far as a coherent policy was concerned.

Because of the triumph of general principles which were so delusively simple, everything in French colonial organization came to centre round assimilation. At a blow, this was to solve all native and political and economic problems connected with colonization. France was organized on the principles of Rousseau and 1789; what more natural, then, that the colonies should be organized *in toto* on the model of France? Thus, the guiding principles of French organization were assimilation of the natives to French citizens, assimilation of colonial economic organization to that of France, and (to 1901 at least) assimilation of political organization to that of a French *département*. A colony was a section of France separated from France by a geographical accident, but still a part of

<sup>41</sup> J. Harmand, *Domination et Colonisation* (1910), pp. 13-16; O. Meynier, *L'Afrique Noire* (1911), p. 258.

the one organism and living by exactly the same means. This outlook came to dominate French colonization, the more easily because of the natural tendency of the French to excessive centralization and officialdom. "Look at the laws of our colonies," cried Chailley-Bert in derision. "They are laws which have been modelled almost entirely on the Home Legislature. They consist partly of the Civil Code, the Code of Procedure, the Commercial Code, the Penal Code, and a host of our administrative laws. In Algeria, in Indo-China, in Guiana, in Réunion, we find almost everywhere the same laws and the same administration."<sup>42</sup> The French construed assimilation to mean, not the adaptation of the French spirit and institutions to varying conditions, but an absolute identity, even to the most minute detail. Instead of being an ideal, a tendency, a principle, assimilation was taken to mean an exact reproduction of the *minutiae* of administration in every branch. The wider parallelism of spirit which a moderate theory of assimilation would have entailed was submerged beneath a mass of detail which prevented the very aim sought: concentrating on the letter, it lost the spirit. As Ribot said, "it was the triumph of a false symmetry," and a direct refusal to face the fact that the primal desideratum in organizing a world-wide Empire was not conformity of method to some philosophical truth anent the nature of French colonization,—and still less to have one rigid method which could not be adhered to in practice, and the lack of substitutions for which meant a complete absence of method.

By about 1905, the failure of assimilation, both as a basic principle and as a means of actual administration, was manifest. As early as 1892, Ferry had led a reaction against *administrative* assimilation; *native* assimilation had resulted only in the failure of Algeria and the farce of the Old Colonies; and *economic* assimilation was breaking down, now that the colonies were receiving a kind of financial autonomy of their own. The failure in every branch was obvious: but no adequate substitute had emerged, and the resultant gap, fitting in as it did with the prevailing feeling of disillusionment in regard to the colonies, aided the cause of anti-colonialism.

Another contributory factor at this stage was the changing economic relationship between mother-country and colonies. This issue had been forced by the rapid transformation of Indo-China and the demands of Algeria for fiscal autonomy. The colonies were asserting their economic desires independently of, and even in conflict with, those of France; and Ferry's idea of reciprocal consideration had given way to a more or less veiled antagonism. By 1900, the local industries of Indo-China were demanding protection against metropolitan competition, and, at home,

<sup>42</sup> Chailley-Bert (1894), *op. cit.*, pp. ix-x.

this was looked on as symbolical of the new colonial status, and as something to be systematically repressed. De Lanessan, for example, was bitterly opposed for encouraging cotton-spinning at Hanoi,<sup>43</sup> and even Doumer, a successor of his, although a radical reformer at home, held in 1905 that a colony should only be allowed to produce those cereals and raw materials demanded by the mother-country and should never engage in industry. Harmand, a leading theorist, thus summed up the relationship in 1912, and he again was a liberal:—

“That the colonies are made for the metropolis, for the many and varied advantages that the metropolis may draw from them, is evident: if colonies, the foundation of which nearly always costs the metropolis so much money and sacrifices and which exposes them to such great risks, were not so made to serve those metropolises, *they would have no raison d'être*, and one cannot see by what aberration civilized states would dispute them with so much rude jealousy.”<sup>44</sup>

The proposition was deemed to be beyond argument: and yet, in practice, the colonies were asserting themselves as distinct organisms, with interests either apart from, or opposed to those of France, the cases of Algeria and Indo-China being especially in point. They demanded a right to manufacture goods; they claimed tariff privileges; they even welcomed foreign trade and capital. Seeing these tendencies, the French in France added an economic argument to their already profound opposition to colonies. If colonies were to fall off the mother-tree as soon as the process of pacification was finished, of what use were they at all? The issue was palpably clear to the French, who could not, and still cannot, conceive an autonomous relationship between centre and parts.

Somewhat irrationally, further support to this antagonistic position was given by the failure of French emigration in so far as the colonies were concerned. Bismarck's old gibe that the French had colonies without colonists was clearly merited, for most French colonies could be adequately described as “functionaries and a garrison.” Or as Clemenceau, in his usual vitriolic denunciation, burst out in the Deputies in November, 1890:—

“Since you are great colonizers, well, colonize! In order, you say, that one may see these colonies, see capital go there, see colonists arrive and industry prosper and commerce establish itself, and new markets found there? Well, *do it!* But, up to the present, you have exported only functionaries who cost us a great deal, and who seem to have no other task than to prevent all this coming to pass!”<sup>45</sup>

<sup>43</sup> J. L. de Lanessan, *La Tunisie* (2nd edition, 1917), pp. 182–184; Dubois et Tierrier, *Un Siècle d'Expansion Coloniale* (1902), p. 819.

<sup>44</sup> J. Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>45</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 28/11/90, p. 2302.



And the condemnation was justified, if European emigration was desired in the colonies, for outside of Algeria, which was always considered as "a prolongation of France," and not as a colony at all, there were practically no French settlers in the colonies. This did not mean to say that Frenchmen were not leaving France: some 15,000 were going every year to La Plata and Canada, and even Chile, and the ordinary French citizens in the nineties heard far more of land and conditions in those countries than in their own colonies.<sup>46</sup> This drift only served to make the failure of transplantation *within* the French Empire the more obvious, and the opponents of colonization asked what was the use of colonies which failed to attract colonists?

As a matter of fact, this attitude was largely fallacious, because, acting under Ferry's theory, France had sought, and had been able to obtain, only tropical possessions, *colonies d'exploitation*, which demanded capital rather than colonists. It is true that the annexation of Africa had proceeded so far that no other colonies remained save this type, but, beyond the pressure of geographical facts, there was the wider theory, based on the decline of the French population and the need of finding employment for Frenchmen at home. Instead, therefore, of holding up the emigration to La Plata as a trend to be emulated in the French colonies, it would have been far more logical to have praised the absence of emigration to the colonies, and to deprecate the movement to South America. But, as it was, the argument was twisted to the purposes of the anti-colonials in France, and, since the premise of the theorem could not be denied, the argument was accepted, because by this time Ferry's theory was rather forgotten.

All of these reasons combined to explain the growing antagonism to the colonies in France during the present century, and to show why French general opinion thought of the colonies in terms of opprobrium and "the eternal colonial scandal." A fault unnoticed in France would suffice to reopen the whole matter, and to provoke an attack on the entire basis of the colonial system.<sup>47</sup> Literature too frequently had this *motif*, and the maladministration and crimes resulting from the bush-nostalgia of the African colonies and the refinements of corruption in Indo-China and the dallying insouciance of the Pacific were more to the front than the solid economic work emerging in these years. Algeria meant de Maupassant's *Allouma*, Africa in general a kind of background for *affaires* like the Toqué-Gaud scandal in the Congo, the Pacific a

<sup>46</sup> Burdeau Report (*L'Algérie en 1892*), p. 59. Compare P. Doumer, *L'Indo-Chine Française* (1905), p. 1, or Chailley-Bert (1894), *op. cit.*, p. xvii.

<sup>47</sup> Sarraut in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 21/3/22; Alapetite in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 31/1/12; or debate in Deps., 20/11/08, on Guinea.

laboratory in sensualism for the Lotis and the Rarahus, and the Indo-Chinese lands the last word in corruption.<sup>48</sup> Feeling was best reflected by Emile Fabre's much-discussed play *Les Sauterelles* (1912), with its general atmosphere of colonial demoralization, or by the moral disintegration in Delafosse's analyses of African psychology.<sup>49</sup> French interest in the colonies was largely of this nature; and there was little desire to obtain a real knowledge of colonial evolution. In 1914, for example, the *Deutsche Kolonial-Gesellschaft* in Berlin had some hundreds of thousands of adherents, while France's nearest equivalent, the *Comité de l'Afrique Française*, had only 4,000! France thus knew little of her colonies, and was not anxious to fill the gap: antagonism and scandal sufficed.

It was little wonder, then, that the period from 1906 to 1914 was a fruitless one. France seemed drifting by way of an antagonistic lethargy to a recrudescence of the anti-colonialism of Ferry's period,—a position the more remarkable because of the obvious prosperity of Indo-China and Madagascar, and the general forward movement in the preceding decade in Africa. A hopeful sign, however, was in the attacks of M. Viollette, the colonial budget-reporter, from 1911 onwards, right in the heart of the period of lethargy. By dint of attacking Klobukowski's rule in Indo-China, he threw the whole colonial question into relief and showed the extent of the drift in the preceding years. For the first time since the great parliamentary debates of 1891-1892 on colonizing companies and French policy in Africa, there were vigorous discussions on colonial questions in Parliament.<sup>50</sup> Messimy, Viollette's predecessor, had performed a valuable service in clearly summing-up the statistical position of the Empire: now Viollette utilized that summary as a basis for his constructive attacks, and, even though somewhat unduly iconoclastic, he thrust the issue into the forefront of politics.<sup>51</sup>

At the same time, a strongly marked decentralizing tendency became noticeable. Ever since the institution of a separate budget for Algeria in 1900 and the vigorous demands of the Tonkin industrialists, colonial interests *per se* had been pressed to the fore. Hitherto, this assertion had been construed as a sign of impending dissolution, but, towards the close of the period of lethargy, it was perceived that such a colonial development, even in the direction of a partial autonomy, might strengthen the French Empire. A loosening of one form of control, that

<sup>48</sup> As in Claude Farrère's horrible *Les Civilisés*.

<sup>49</sup> Delafosse in *Les états d'âme d'un Colonial*; Sarraut, *La Mise en Valeur des Colonies Françaises* (1923), p. 108.

<sup>50</sup> In *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 4-7/4/11; Senate, 1-3/7/11.

<sup>51</sup> See *Rapport sur les Budgets locaux des Colonies* (1911), Part I, or Messimy in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 5/4/11.

is, really had the effect of strengthening others, and so the net result was gain,—and this was quite a new concept in French colonial theory, “the theory of compensations,” as it might be called. The gap previously left by the breakdown of assimilation was now beginning to be filled by the development of each colony as a unit, and along its own lines. Administrative assimilation had really been doomed by the reports of Ferry and Burdeau in 1892; tariff-assimilation, though still triumphing, had been rigorously attacked since the Colonial Congress of 1906; economic assimilation in general was anomalous in the changed state of affairs; and the idea of “association,” or, in English terms, “indirect rule,” had removed the burden of assimilation as it affected native races.

The upshot was decentralization. Both in 1907 and 1911, the powers of the Governors-General were enlarged, and the logical implications of the law of 1900, which allowed each colony to have a local budget, were necessitating a larger and larger degree of financial autonomy. The decrees of Lebrun, the Minister of the Colonies in 1911, in particular, aided as they were by corresponding privileges allowed by Klotz, the Minister of Finance, marked the formal adoption of decentralization as the principle governing colonial affairs, and emancipated the colonies from the narrow political and economic tutelage of Paris.<sup>52</sup> But there were not wanting suggestions that this new tendency, as diametrically opposed to the principles previously in force, would involve only a paralysis of the colonial system, which had been built up on the very basis of “organization from Paris,”—a “method of fusion and concentration.” In all, the reforming movement would seem to have been a forced development in these years,—an unduly rapid reaction against the existing state of drift. To counteract the inert spirit of colonization, the reformers turned from consolidation to root-and-branch innovations, and were proceeding too rapidly.

By 1914, therefore, the French colonies were at the cross-roads. France had completed the conquest of her colonial Empire, and was even subduing the last rebels of Mauretania and taking the last steps across the Sahara. But organization had lagged, because the old ideas of assimilation in every sphere no longer commanded a general support. Yet, on the other hand, a decade of lethargy had bred a spirit of pessimism, and the new policy of decentralization was, to say the least, suspect. France, though perceiving the breakdown of her previous policies of assimilation and *rattachement* to Paris, lacked a constructive alternative policy, and, while conceding that a limited autonomy was not in itself necessarily harmful, was seeking a *via media* that would still concentrate

<sup>52</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Dets., 5/4/11, 28/5/11 (Messimy Report).





the essential power in Paris. The colonies, on the other hand, having experienced a considerable degree of self-government in economic matters since 1900, were demanding an extension of their political rights, which were practically non-existent, and advocated a policy of dispersion of power. On the whole, France was just beginning to face the "new colonial problem." Messimy's information, Viollette's attacks, and the forced decentralization of 1911-1914 had all helped to bring about this situation; and France was facing the problem as a whole, and in its new orientation, when the war of 1914 came. Conquest was over; the early organization had failed; the implications of the various experiments (in the financial field, for instance) could now be gauged; and the material (if not the attitude of mind) was there for the evolution of colonial objectives and methods. As Jules Harmand summed up, France at this stage wanted clearly defined objectives, a colonial doctrine, principles to harmonize her colonial policy with her general development and that of her colonies, and a method of execution conforming to these principles and objectives,—all of which she had never had before.<sup>53</sup> France was clearly at the stage when the various disconnected and crossed threads could be picked up and sorted into a general pattern. She had the results of conquest and economic development in the past; and there seemed no reason why, if the inordinate feeling of antagonism to the colonies were to decline, and if the problem were faced as a whole, a definite colonial theory and policy could not emerge. The Empire was there, and the experience of the multitudinous experiments of the past: the future was what France made it. The strands were coming together naturally, by the very logic of events and the degree of colonial development, when the whole movement was shattered in 1914, and the problem changed its form.

<sup>53</sup> Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

## CHAPTER II

### GENERAL ECONOMIC POLICY

**D**ESPITE the absence of a regular policy in practice, certain general conceptions were always at the back of French colonization. Of these, the most essential was that France neither had nor desired "settlement-colonies." In French colonial philosophy, there were three kinds of colonies: "*colonies de commerce ou comptoirs*," "*colonies de plantations ou d'exploitation*," and "*colonies agricoles ou de peuplement*."<sup>1</sup> The first included such embryonic trading-posts as existed on the coast of Gabun and Senegal, exchange-posts dotted down in the midst of a wilderness of tropical natives, and destined for no expansion.

"*Colonies d'exploitation*" were of a different nature, and were indeed the crux of the whole scheme. It is curiously difficult to explain this term, especially as the English term, "exploitation," represents by no means the same concept as the corresponding French one. Indeed, the meaning of the term is not at all conveyed in the sense of "exploitation": its significance is not so much economic as demographic. A colony of "exploitation" is one so situated, climatically or from the point of view of population, as to preclude any idea of European settlement on a large scale. It is a colony in which geographical conditions have decided that the great bulk of the population will always be native. Naturally, all developed tropical or sub-tropical possessions fall under this heading; but so too would temperate regions with a native population so teeming as to admit of no European labouring population. In such colonies the functions of the European government are confined to general regulation and to economic development through the agency of imported capital. The colony will be ruled from above and retained for the benefit accruing to the mother-country: incidentally, of course, the position of the native population will improve, by the very transformation of the conditions of material existence, but that is not an essential feature of the policy towards this class of colony.

A "colony of settlement," on the other hand, is one so situated as

<sup>1</sup> P. Leroy-Beaulieu, *De la Colonisation chez les Peuples Modernes* (1902 edition), Vol. II, p. 564, or L. Vignon (1888), *op. cit.*, pp. 4-6.

to allow the introduction of a large European population of all classes. It is a colony wherein the conditions of life in the mother-country can be reproduced in their essentials, where there can be extensive human migration as distinct from the migration of capital, and where European settlers can live and flourish and reproduce their kind. Naturally, such colonies are limited to the temperate zone, and, even there, to regions wherein the interests of the European population can be placed in the ascendant. Such regions are Australia and Canada, while India and Egypt and Madagascar and the Dutch East Indies are examples of "colonies of exploitation." Briefly, the difference between the two classes is that the one are "white men's lands," and the others "natives' lands." It is not that there is exploitation in the one and autonomous development in the other: indeed, such is the state of French colonial theory that, even if she had had colonies of settlement, they would have been "exploited" quite as much as "colonies of exploitation," for the absolute subservience of the colony to the mother-country has been the very mortar giving cohesion to the whole French colonial structure.

As it was, geography decided that all of the French colonies fell within the second category,—all were "colonies of exploitation." Indo-China, West Africa, the Congo, the Pacific, the sugar-islands,—the situation of all of these denied the possibility of white settlement. Even Algeria and Tunisia fell primarily within this class, because, although the climatic conditions there did not absolutely preclude large-scale European settlement, the presence of a predominant *bloc* of natives produced the same effect. So that, although the peculiarities of Algeria and Tunisia necessitated their classification as "mixed colonies," in a class by themselves, fundamentally they were "colonies of exploitation." Algeria is more an India than an Australia, despite the sub-temperate climate of the region north of the Atlas. France had no colonies of settlement in the temperate regions: all of her possessions were tropical or sub-tropical, and not one was suitable for intensive agricultural development.

*The Comité Duplex*, founded by Bonvalot the explorer to develop the colonies, sought to find exceptions to this generalization, and, by means of a scientific survey, to determine whether France was entirely doomed to tropical exploitation in her colonies. The result of the survey was so clear as to admit of no dispute.<sup>2</sup> Algeria certainly allowed European settlement as far as the climate was concerned, but to counteract this there was the native problem: the Senegal and Dahomey and Gabun were clearly impossible: the Ivory Coast allowed no small settlement and imposed almost insuperable obstacles in the way of

<sup>2</sup> *Doit-on aller aux Colonies? Enquête du Comité Duplex* (1907).



capitalistic *entrepreneurs* : Madagascar offered nothing for capitalists and little for small settlers, save near certain urban areas : the place of the Indo-Chinese in agriculture and the country's limitation to rice-production positively forbade European settlement there, unless competition with the native were allowed by proceedings so arbitrary as to be clearly inadmissible, and offered a scope only for the large-scale director : New Caledonia was like Algeria, and Tahiti suitable for capital only, and then hindered by land and labour difficulties. In brief, nowhere were there unlimited, or even large, possibilities for European settlement. The French colonist was not the peasant but the franc. Such settlement as there was in the colonies was to be by natives and not Frenchmen. Indeed, if a colony is a place where nationals of the colonizing Power can settle, France had no colonies, but only "dominions," or countries of domination—using both of these terms in their original classical meaning, Jules Harmand, a leading colonial theorist, always maintained that France had no colonies, and that this fact of necessity determined her objectives and policies. The confusion that so often arose was because this fundamental difference was forgotten, and there were efforts to make French families migrate to places which were obviously not suitable for them. The analogy of the United States and Canada and Australia was always intruding itself and obscuring the general clarity of French conceptions, whereas it would have been just as logical to have advocated the migration of English labourers to India or Nigeria.

Another needlessly confusing trend of thought arose when this abstention from emigration, which was even desirable (given France's demographic situation and the position of her colonies), was linked up with the statement that "the French cannot colonize," as, for instance, in the above-mentioned outbursts of Bismarck and Clemenceau, and the general attitude of the anti-colonials. Were refutation of this *canard* needed, Canada and La Plata would alone serve to disprove the old myth : the explanation of the lack of settlement in the French colonies proper was not at all in the absence of a colonizing spirit, but solely because destiny had given France no colonies in which such settlement was possible, save perhaps Northern Algeria and parts of western New Caledonia.

Thus, it is clear that, the French Empire being situated as it is, France cannot indulge in extensive policies of migration ; nor, the demographic position of France being what it is, would this have been desirable. The geography of the colonies and the population-position of the mother-country combined, and the situation was so clear that the very existence of the complaints against the lack of French settlement in the colonies is difficult to understand, save that it has always been the obvious gibe

against the colonial party. Beyond that, it has clearly no *raison d'être*, and is rather a good feature of the situation than something to be condemned. France's colonial policy in this regard is an exact replica of the Japanese, the idea being to draw raw materials from the colonies and find markets for metropolitan products there, and by this means to find sufficient employment for her own population in the industries of the mother-country. It is essentially an industrial polity, and in no sense an emigration one.

As French colonial policy came to be defined, therefore, its first point was that colonization was not a relief for over-population.<sup>3</sup> In fact, "*peuplement*" has little to do with colonization in this sense, save where it will strengthen the mother-country and find employment for hands which are so numerous as to be idle in the mother-country itself. To say that a colony is a new France overseas is not really in accord with French colonial philosophy. As a corollary of this, the second premise of the syllogism states that all colonization is for the benefit of the life of the mother-country, and that the colonies neither have, nor can have, an autonomous existence or development apart from those of the motherland. These twin ideas of the subordination of the colonies and their complete effacement within the general organism have always been at the basis of French colonial efforts, and explain, and connect, the two policies of "economic subservience" and "assimilation." The colony is to be an element of strength to the motherland; all of its efforts are to be to lessen the burdens of that motherland: without France, it knows, and can know, no existence; and even autonomy, in the sense of a particular *local* development within the general system, cannot be entertained. To speak of special developments for separate colonies was as absurd to a Frenchman as to speak of an arm without a body: each limb existed only as a part of the general organism, and to fulfil a definite *rôle* in the functioning of the organism as an entity: and all were subservient to the one brain or nerve-centre. The French colonies were entirely organized on the model of an organism: hence the emphasis on the whole and not the parts, and, indeed, the resolute refusal to think of the parts either as entities or as potential entities.<sup>4</sup>

The idea of colonial subservience has always cropped up in French efforts, and, even now, in Albert Sarraut's reform projects of 1921, the famous *mise en valeur* scheme which is to transform the whole Empire, it is the essential premise on which he erects his argument. Without this assumption, the entire colonial system, past and present, is meaning-

<sup>3</sup> Compare Ferry in *Journal Officiel*, Dets., 29/7/85.

<sup>4</sup> Article by Asmis in *Preussische Jahrbücher*, Dec. 1921, quoted in Sarraut (1923), p. 96.

less. However, this does not simply mean the old *Pacte Colonial*, or the Navigation System of the English, because the theory is now widened so as to admit the possibility, and even the desirability, of colonial progress. The idea of subservience persists, but is given a wider connotation. To the beginning of this century, there was the basis that colonies were to benefit the mother-country: this was their *only* justification, and there was a strong feeling that it was only fair, and perhaps even desirable, that this should adversely affect their own development, as an antidote to separatist or individualistic tendencies. "If they realize their dependence on us, they will not want to stand alone,"—that was the attitude.

But by 1914, while it was still asserted that the aim of colonization was to help France, there was coupled with this a recognition that development might in most cases help the colonies too. However, it was still clearly understood that, if a conflict arose between the interests of France and those of the colony, as occurred with the rise of industry in Tonkin and the beet-sugar question in the West Indies, the interests of France, despite the hardship and the apparent injustice of the case in question, were to be paramount. The possibility of conflicting interests had already arisen in practically every colony, and this was the general solution given. The utilitarian concept was as dominant as ever; the only difference was the admission that, up to the point where the development ceased to be complementary and became competitive, the benefit could be dual.

The thin edge of the wedge had been inserted with the admission that the colony might develop outside of those directions in which it was to contribute to France's coffers and needs. But it was still the exception rather than the rule that the colony should be studied as well as France, and, to 1914, the interests of the natives were in no case given a serious consideration. Always in the background was the assumption that the goal was to be one in which the colony contributed the maximum to French needs, in some form or other. The utilitarian concept was never absent, even when it became the dominant instead of the only *motif*. France, even to the time of the post-war reconstructionist policies, even to Sarraut's projects, was for ever harking back to Montesquieu's theories,—“that the American colonies were the best, because they have articles of commerce which we have not and which we cannot have, and they lack that which we produce.” And there was still a frank conformance to the opinion of the Encyclopædists that “colonies are made by and for the mother-country,” and any other interpretation of colonial destinies was practically lacking. That was, and still is, the French dream of colonization, and explains the curiously static state of colonial theory, and why the articles of Diderot on this matter read as if they were written

within the last decade. That is why, also, the notion of colonial development *qua* colonial, and anything even remotely approaching the British dominion-status, has been simply unthinkable. Centripetal tendencies were in the ascendant, and devolution of power, even the slightest, was the primal anathema. The needs of the organism were the fundamental ones; and, if a limb could be strengthened as a part of the organism, good, but, if not, then development was to be banned.

Linked up with this theory of subordination was that of assimilation, because both were aspects or implications of the organic analogy. Economic "assimilation" meant the subordination of colonial interests to those of the metropolitan consumers and manufacturers: administrative "assimilation" meant such subordination as pertained in the case of a French *département* or *commune*, and the implication that a separate existence was as impossible for Indo-China as for a Midi department: native "assimilation" was a sacrifice to the principles of French civilization and 1789, and the charming egotism that development meant changes on French lines. In each field, there was the idea of subordination to France and French interests or ideas, and a denial of local developments. Everything was centralized, and made uniform, and looked at from the interests of the centre. In practice, then, the general principles meant as much centralization and assimilation as possible, the minimum devolution of either political or financial authority, and a reservation of colonial markets to the mother-country, however much this adversely affected colonial development.

But this clear-cut theory was hindered at times by the existence of quite opposite conceptions due to the welling-up of a tide of philosophical humanitarianism, which, in a usually brief career, reversed the basic principles of colonial organization time and again. In 1789, in 1848, in 1862, and in 1871, such emotional *furores*, for they were little else, swept over the colonial field, and the previous organization went reeling back, submerged by the new-found zeal of a general principle of liberalism. A similar disturbing feature, although on a lesser scale, was always present in the form of "the ideas of '89," or what they were taken to be; and thus there was a constant fluctuation between varying concepts of "assimilation." Economic assimilation, for instance, meant only the subordination of the colony, whereas native assimilation meant not so much subordination as equality of development: and frequently, there was the anomaly of an attempted development along both lines at once, until the cleavage was revealed by a threat to the material interests of France, and in particular to those of the French manufacturers.

It is only in the light of these two opposite conceptions and influences that the apparently meaningless *volte-faces* in French policy can be logically

explained : each policy in itself was logical to a certain point, but each proceeded from premises which, while true and acceptable in themselves, by no means considered *every* factor in the situation, and thus, by not being exclusive, admitted of other, and, as often turned out, diametrically opposed, policies. The discrepancies may thus be explained away by remembering the excessive logic of the French spirit, under the influence of which a partly logical development along one line might for the time being overshadow everything else, only to give way to an equally logical but quite incompatible policy. France suffered from logical short-sightedness, and could not perceive anything but the argument which she had adopted for the moment : her policy was not a compromise between differing trends, not an attempt to harmonize as far as possible all the elements in the situation, but a fluctuation between arguments based on partial sets of facts alone. That is why there were many contradictions and little continuity, rather than a progress through compromise. But, all in all, if there was a continual dabbling with the implications of humanitarianism, and a spasmodic attempt at liberalism, the material basis of the French policy was in the idea of "exploitation" and the subordination of the parts to the whole. That concept gave the real unity to the various French policies in the colonial field.

In practice, the organization of the first colonial Empire, and indeed of the second, save for the interim of 1789-1799, took the form of the *Pacte Colonial*.<sup>5</sup> This was simple in its premises. No colony was to indulge in any foreign trade : all colonial products were to go to France : all transport was to be in French hands : and the colonies were to exist only to serve France, although in return their products were to be favoured in the French market. Despite the last-mentioned sop, the essence of the system was clearly monopoly and exclusion, and the colonies were not viewed otherwise than as fields to be exploited, as agencies contributing to French interests. "Perish the colonies," cried even Robespierre after the collapse of the monarchy, "if the colonists wish by menaces to compel us to legislate in *their* interests !" Then, when the colonies held that they must either have slavery again or die, Dupont de Nemours sneeringly replied : "It is better to sacrifice the colonies than a principle !" <sup>6</sup> Even revolutionary France could not conceive of colonial development as something to be fostered in itself, or of the colonies as entities : and the result was that such liberal tendencies as there were in the first flush of revolutionary enthusiasm quickly died out.

<sup>5</sup> Montesquieu, *Esprit des Lois*, Liv. xxi, c. 21. The creed of the *Pacte Colonial* is best summed up in the documents reproduced in Isaac's Report in *Journal Officiel*, doct. parl., sess. ord., Senate, 1888, p. 43, or de Forbonais' article, "Colonie," in *L'Encyclopédie*.

<sup>6</sup> L. Deschamps, *Les Colonies pendant la Revolution* (1898), p. 100 et seq., 128.

The ideas of the *Pacte* were as strongly held as ever, and lasted until the free-trade triumph of 1861. With these new ideas of freedom of commerce, the law of July 17, 1861, allowed a freedom of export and import to the larger colonies, and another five years later introduced a partial fiscal autonomy. Power was given certain colonies (three only, it is true, but then the gain was one of principle) to impose a *douane* or tariff on foreign goods and an *octroi de mer* on all, foreign and French alike. Even Algeria, hitherto rigorously submitted to the exclusionist policy, obtained freedom in 1867; and a general measure of 1868 completely abolished the *Pacte*. The previous measures had secured exceptions for individual colonies, this new decree dealt with all alike. The system of two centuries, therefore, in that it meant a restriction of colonial trade to France alone, was ended; but this did not imply any extension of colonial powers of taxation, and, in most colonies, France still insisted on the practical exclusion of foreign goods by manipulating the tariff. Those privileged colonies in the sugar-islands which had used their new-found privileges to suppress the *douane* and, by making all goods pay the same *octroi*, to remove the protection given French goods, were reminded that their liberties were rather a gesture than powers to be actually exercised: and it was made clear that such an individual rendering had been in no wise contemplated by the framers of the decrees.<sup>7</sup>

By the time of the Third Republic, therefore, the nominal position was that the colonies could trade where they liked, but there was no uniform opinion on the question of the favours to be accorded to French trade with them. The privileged colonies of 1866 could legislate as they pleased, or at least, if they could not openly discriminate against France, they could, by defying the French interpretation of their privileges and insisting on the very letter of their rights, remove the discrimination against foreigners, and this meant a good deal to colonies situated in the Caribbean.

The other colonies were demanding a similar limited autonomy, but, on the other hand, opinion in France was crystallizing against any extension of the privileges of 1866, and indeed, there was a pronounced movement in favour of their repeal. The reforms were now deemed to have been ill-advised and premature, and the French manufacturers, turning from the free-trade ideas of the sixties, and taking into account the rising tide of protectionism, were demanding "tariff assimilation," that is, the consideration of all colonies as merely a prolongation of France, with the consequent discrimination against foreigners. Indeed,

<sup>7</sup> A. Girault, *The Colonial Tariff Policies of France* (1916), p. 76. See pp. 5-7 for the various stages.

it was clearly recognized by this time that the reforms of the sixties, even the abolition of the *Pacte Colonial*, had not been a measure of colonial policy at all, but merely an unexpected and undesirable corollary of the general economic policy of the motherland and of the free-trade treaties of 1860. France had decided for freedom of trade with foreign countries in 1866, and logically this had to extend to the colonies. They had to be given the same privileges as foreign countries, or rather, foreign countries, as a result of treaty agreements, had to be allowed to trade with the colonies. France thus masked an international concession which she could not help, as a measure of colonial liberalism. Hereafter, then, the general idea was not that the colonies were to be treated to the disadvantages of foreign countries and denied their privileges, but that they were parts of France separated from France by a geographical accident, but as much a part of France as if the connecting link had been a land-road instead of a seaway. This applied to goods going to France but not always to goods from France to the colonies, and so the new position came to mean that the colonies received the disadvantages of being part of France without the corresponding advantages.

At this stage of confused tendencies, and fitting in with the general colonial concepts of France, came the protectionist reaction, occasioned by the crisis of 1882. Free-trade in France and in the colonies was definitely opposed, and the newer idea was a narrow customs-union, the peculiarly limited theory of French colonization determining that this should take the form of "assimilation."<sup>8</sup> "Assimilation," as has been previously pointed out, means many things: but, in this fiscal connection, it means such a linking to France that, in theory, a colony was to be treated exactly as a *département*. The French Empire, France and the remotest colony alike, was linked just as was the German *Zollverein* some sixty years previously, with free trade within the union and a rigorous discrimination against the foreigner outside. But there was this significant gap between theory and fact in the French conception, —that France still, although illogically, persisted in taxing certain colonial products on their entry into France. The interests of French manufacturers had brought about the reaction from free-trade, and, just as previously the colonial system had been changed to bring it into conformity with the then new free-trade ideas favoured by French industrialists, so now, with the swing-back to protection in France, there was a corresponding reversal of policy in the colonies. The particular needs and considerations of the colonies counted for absolutely nothing: one fact alone, the position of metropolitan industry, was considered, and, on its needs, policy was determined. As Girault sums up, "the

<sup>8</sup> *Journal Officiel*, *Déps.*, 18/7/91.

colonial consumer was openly sacrificed to the producer of the imperial state"; so too was the colonial producer of raw materials.<sup>9</sup>

The fundamental cause of tariff assimilation, therefore, was the protectionist reaction, strengthened as it was by the crisis of low prices throughout the eighties and by the tariff laws of 1885 and 1887. But there were additional causes, or rather tendencies, working in the same direction, like the above-mentioned reaction against the colonial liberalism of the sixties, for instance. Of the remainder the most noticeable was a revival of the old idea of a complete assimilation, an identity almost, between colonies and mother-country. This idea had been overshadowed during the liberalism of the sixties and the neglect of the seventies, but now it appeared stronger than ever. Two extra-parliamentary commissions (Pothiau's in 1878 and Duclerc's in 1882) vigorously supported assimilation as the basis of all colonial administration,<sup>10</sup> and arguments to the contrary, the arguments of economic statistics in particular, were thrust aside. Nothing could compete with the mechanical logicity of this assimilative principle, because it was simply carrying the idea at the basis of French republicanism to its utmost implications: to argue to the contrary was practically to attack French civilization and reason. Assimilation, so surrounded by protective barriers as to be almost sacrosanct, disposed of its rivals by refusing them a hearing. Granting certain premises, it was a logical consummation, and the position was so interpreted that to question those premises was almost tantamount to treason. France was suffering from a philosophical disease, and could not see the economic facts on the horizon, and the manufacturers took care to prevent those facts from coming within the line of vision.<sup>11</sup>

Then again, the anti-colonial feeling in France worked in the same direction, and at this time took the form of a fear of colonial competition. Ferry interpreted the colonies as meaning new markets and as strengthening to metropolitan industry; while his opponents—and it must be remembered that they completely defeated him in 1885—were obsessed with the opposite theory that colonies, which involved France in so much expenditure both of men and money, meant not markets but new competition. "*Competition* remained the enemy, and the idea that it could come to us in our own colonies, in countries where we were the undisputed masters, seemed especially intolerable."

The policy of tariff assimilation was thus the result of a number of influences. Economic and political theory combined to contribute the ideas of protection and assimilation; and the material interests of the French manufacturers joined with the dominant anti-colonial feeling to

<sup>9</sup> *Compte Rendu des travaux du Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1909, p. 310.

<sup>10</sup> Girault (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 82.



add the ideas that the colonies should be subordinate and, while in no sense developing so as to become competitors of France, should afford markets for French goods and become reservoirs of raw materials. These ideas were crystallizing throughout the eighties, at which time there was no order in the financial organization of the colonies. The *sénatus-consulte* of 1866, which had stereotyped the principle of autonomy, had been replaced by a decree of November, 1882, which, while ostensibly continuing the autonomy-idea, really allowed a great variety of *régimes* in the various colonies. In this decade, Algeria (1884) and Indo-China (1887) were submitted to the *régime* of assimilation.<sup>12</sup> Products imported into these colonies were subject to the same duties as if they were entering France, and both colonies, the two most flourishing possessions of France overseas, were treated exactly as if they were portions of the mainland territory. Such a triumph for the assimilators really decided the issue, and nothing could check the protectionist movement. The decline of trade in the two colonies already affected was unnoticed, and their financial crises, directly affecting the budgets of both, attributed to other causes.

Hence, the famous law of January 11, 1892, extended this protective principle to be the general basis of French colonial organization<sup>13</sup>; and it is a significant commentary on the state of affairs that it passed unquestioned and almost unnoticed. The conditions at the time of its passing leave no doubt as to the aims of the reformers. Etienne, the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, definitely stated in 1891 that the law was based on the idea of colonial subordination. "We do indeed believe, and assert emphatically, that since France must incur the obligations involved in a colonial domain, it is just and proper that this domain should be reserved as a market for French products."<sup>14</sup> A colony was, in essence, a safety-valve for the French manufacturer. The stress was entirely on the French industrialists, and the colonies, in no sense entities in themselves, and in no sense viewed as having, or as likely to have, developments of their own, were looked on simply as an element in the general problem confronting French industry. Accordingly, 107 Chambers of Commerce were consulted before the passage of the law, but not one colonial! And advice was asked of 66 Chambers of Art and Manufactures, and of 817 companies and professional chambers, but not of the governors and councils and planters' associations of the colonies. Even the Under-Secretary of the Colonies was not con-

<sup>12</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 30/12/84, 12/2/87. See *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National*, 1889-1890, Vol. II, pp. 230, 345.

<sup>13</sup> See Thomson's report in *Journal Officiel*, doc. parl., sess. ord. 1891, p. 877. Debates are in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 18/7/91, the final law in 12/1/92.

<sup>14</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Senate, 18/12/91.

sulted! As was the case with the free-trade policy in the sixties, this was not a colonial measure but a metropolitan one: it affected the colonies, but was determined by and for the interests of France.

Indeed, the striking feature of the situation was the uniformity of opinion on the matter. It is true that the colonial societies and their organs of *L'Afrique Française* and *La Quinzaine Coloniale* were just being formed in these years, and that there was no adequate voicing of colonial interests: but the colonial party, such as it existed at the time, joined with the anti-colonials in supporting the measure; and thus there was a united opinion, either from conviction or indifference or a feeling that a blow was being dealt to the colonies. Even Ferry's party, despite the warning note of Ferry himself, supported it, indeed practically originated it. Easterners as they were, they were demanding some recompense for the credits they had voted for the expansionist policy. The colonies might suffer, they saw, but that was inevitable, and only just, for had not France suffered in establishing them? With this point of view, of course, the opponents of colonial expansion agreed. But the great majority of parliamentarians were frankly indifferent. The *Journal Officiel*, reporting the debates on the question, contains no striking speeches on either side, and there is practically no suggestion that the policy might benefit the colonies. To the contrary, even the supporters of colonial expansion, Etienne for instance, construed it as rather a blow to the colonies, but a blow necessitated by the demands of the mother-country. There could be no clearer proof than the events leading to this Act of the centripetal nature of French colonial policy, and the unquestioned subordination of the colonies to France.<sup>15</sup>

The particular problem was to make the colonies buy French goods. Most colonial products, save in the Oriental markets of Indo-China, naturally gravitated towards France: the difficulty was that the colonists looked elsewhere for their purchases. The framers of the Act of 1892 tried, therefore, to prevent this, and, once having linked the colonies to France by narrow tariff bonds, and having prevented them buying elsewhere, taxed certain of their products on entering France. Securing the colonial import-trade to French manufacturers by tariff boundaries against foreigners would improve the balance of French trade, and to tax the more lucrative colonial products in entering France—a safe procedure seeing that they could not go elsewhere,—would be a direct return for the expenditure the colonies had involved for France. The French manufacturers and the French State would both benefit by the protectionist *régime* thus imposed.

To secure this result, the law declared "tariff assimilation" to be

<sup>15</sup> Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, pp. 309-310.

the rule and "tariff autonomy" the exception for those cases where geographical conditions clearly made assimilation out of the question. But, in ordinary conditions, a colony was to be "assimilated." That is, the import trade of the colonies was to be reserved to the French by imposing the general tariff of France on foreign goods. Goods from France or any other French colony entered free: they could no longer be taxed by the individual colony, as had been possible under the "autonomy" régime of 1866. On the other hand, all foreign products were to pay just as if they were entering France. The "old colonies" could no longer, as they had done in the late sixties, admit foreign goods on the same terms as French, for, hereafter, there was to be a distinct discrimination against the foreigner.<sup>16</sup> The policy was clearly to make the colonies French markets.

But at this point the considerations of logic gave place to those of finance. When dealing with colonial imports, it had been argued that, since the colonies were parts of France, goods entering the colonies should be treated as if they were entering France. Had logic been the only factor taken into account, the corollary of this argument would have been that colonial exports were to enter France free of duty. The colonies were parts of France, ran the former argument: colonial imports should be treated as French imports: logically, therefore, colonial exports should have been treated as French exports and given the right of free entry into France, just as French exports were admitted into the colonies free of duty. But this was not conceded, and here entered the second French argument that the colonies should pay for the sacrifices entailed in their acquisition. The general principle, it is true, was allowed, since it could not very well be denied; but the lucrative tax on certain colonial products, such as tea and coffee and cocoa, was retained.<sup>17</sup>

By reason of this abandonment of the logical implications of assimilation, the policy of 1892 meant in practice that the colonies lost the advantages of free-trade with foreign countries and received in return a limited freedom of exchange with France, but with the limits so manipulated as to exclude certain of their products from the advantages of the compromise. On the whole, by this law, the colonies lost the freedom of the "autonomy" régime of the sixties, lost the advantages of foreign trade, and obtained nothing in return save the right of free-entry of their minor products into France. The important exports, sugar in particular, continued to be penalized as before. "Tariff assimilation" was indeed an ingenious revival of the *Pacte Colonial* under the guise of

<sup>16</sup> See details in *Régime Douanier des Colonies Françaises* (1924), p. 7 et seq., published by Institut Colonial de Marseille,

<sup>17</sup> Section 3, Part 2 of law of 11/1/92.

logic: it meant added taxation and discrimination against the colonies without any reciprocal advantage to them. It was, in essence, a new burden, and the crowning illogicality was to term this so-called logical system "assimilation." Goods came to the colonies as they did to the Midi or to Auvergne, but did products of the Midi or Auvergne pay on entering Paris as did colonial goods? Assimilation was the theory, but discrimination and subordination the practice.

This policy applied to most of the colonies, the exceptions being West Africa, the Congo, and Oceania, in all of which geographical considerations clearly precluded the enforcement of a tariff, and were reinforced by international agreements in so far as the Congo was concerned. Each of these colonies had a separate *régime*, but there was unity in so far as all of their products were taxed on entering France. In theory at least, free entry was the rule for the products of the assimilated colonies, but even this was not conceded to the non-assimilated ones, for whose goods free entry was the exception rather than the rule. As a compensation, however, French products paid import-duties on entering non-assimilated colonies, whereas they entered assimilated regions free.

It is evident, therefore, that the point of view behind the law of 1892 was not imperial but narrowly metropolitan. It was a reversion from the liberal tendencies of the sixties back to the idea of the *Pacte*, and meant a stereotyping of the principle of colonial subordination, and indeed a partial ban on colonial development. "In a good colonial organization," ran the official explanation of certain tariff propositions of 1900, "colonial production must be limited to furnishing to the metropolis raw materials or products which we do not produce. But if, going beyond this function, colonial production attempts to make a ruinous competition with ours, it becomes a dangerous adversary."<sup>18</sup> Again and again, this *motif* reappears, so much so that, paradoxical as it may seem, the very development of the colonies since the law of 1892 has aroused considerable misgiving in France. It was the old conflict over again, with metropolitan and colonial theories clearly ranged one against the other. In other words, the law of 1892 represented centripetal tendencies, and the colonial development, despite the burdens of that law, centrifugal.

Whether the law succeeded or not is a difficult question, because there are so many points of approach. The most obvious conclusion is that it failed to prevent the rise of a distinct colonial attitude and policy, apart from, or even perchance opposed to, that of France. In 1892, the colonies had been inarticulate, and the principle of the law was that they should remain so, and that metropolitan interests alone

<sup>18</sup> Propositions of Krantz in *L'Afrique Française*, Feb. 1900, p. 37, or *Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1909, p. 309.

should be considered. But this position was seen to be untenable. The colonies asserted themselves by a process of natural growth and, ironically enough, this growth was fostered, almost as much as it was impeded, by the operation of the "assimilation" principle. At the time of the law of 1892 there had really been no colonial *bloc*. West Africa was still a series of disconnected coastal-posts with not the slightest semblance of cohesion : the Congo as a colony meant a handful of trading-posts in Gabun : Madagascar had not yet been conquered : Tunisia was undergoing organization : Algeria, paralysed by the system of *rattachements* (control from Paris) and administered as a *département* of France under the Minister of the Interior, was stagnant and viewed as being outside the range of the colonies : the old sugar-colonies were moribund, having no answer to the menace of beet-sugar or the labour-shortage : the Pacific islands knew neither energy nor organization ; but only a drugged apathy of insouciance : and Indo-China, where as yet there was no union, resolved itself into a bankrupt and unpopular Tonkin and a notoriously corrupt Cochin-China. Nowhere was there a really bright spot, nowhere was there a distinctly colonial point of view, and nowhere, save perhaps vaguely in Etienne's mind, was there the concept that the colonies were a coherent organism of their own. The time of the real importance of the colonies, and of the real study of the colonial question, had not yet dawned. Indeed, the very phrase, "the colonial question," had no significance in the France of 1892, for the colonies were not yet an entity so much as a completely unrelated *congeries* of scattered possessions, divided between three ministries, and most of them heavy responsibilities.

But the expansionist policy of 1894-1906, aided as it was by the reaction against both economic and political assimilation, galvanized the colonies into activity, and gave birth to "the colonial question." This was the more obvious when the concession of budgetary autonomy in 1900 and the natural development during the period of consolidation which followed the conquest hastened the emergence of what might be called the economic personality of each colony. Indeed, the law of 1892, by throwing each colony upon itself, played no little part in bringing about this development. That accounts for the apparent anomaly that instead of crushing out the nascent colonial industries, this law directly fostered their growth,—a growth which came to be strengthened and to increase almost *pari passu* with metropolitan antagonism. When vine-planting commenced on the Antananarivo plateau in Madagascar, the deputies of the French vigneronns demanded its cessation ; when the husking of rice and the fabrication of cloth-goods started in Indo-China, Governor and Colonial Office and Parliament alike opposed it ; when the

Dakar railway company in Senegal proposed to use ground-nuts as fuel in place of dear coal, the Marseilles soapmakers protested against the increased price of their raw materials so effectively as to kill the new project; and even a partial revival of the cane-sugar industry in the West Indies was killed by a similar opposition. But all of these antagonisms alike had the effect of defining and strengthening the colonial view-point, until it was characterized by an assertiveness and dogmatism unknown, indeed inconceivable, in 1892. The view-point of that year, in a word, electrified the scattered interests of the colonies into coherency, and, with coherency, power.

But this did not imply a triumph of those interests. Their presence added a new factor to the situation and assured a consideration being afforded to the colonial point of view. No future Act could be passed over their heads, as was the law of 1892: legislation hereafter might be against their wishes, but those wishes and arguments would be clearly expressed, for the colonies had gained articulation.<sup>19</sup> Despite this, however, and perhaps largely because of it, metropolitan interests continued to be in the ascendant, and the law of 1892 still remains the basis of the economic organization of the French colonies, although no longer the sole factor in the situation, as it was when introduced. From the metropolitan point of view, the very rise of a colonial industry, apart from metropolitan industry, is the best proof of the logic of their claims in 1892, and makes their attitude more dogmatic, just as it did that of the colonies.

From the purely economic point of view, the framers of the Act claim that "tariff assimilation" has been a success. They point to the position of the colonies then and now, and attribute the obvious development in the interim to the operation of the Act. They show that colonial trade increased from 899 million francs in 1887 to 2,096 millions in 1907, and that every colony, except the old sugar-islands, have contributed to the general increase. But this line of argument is somewhat fallacious, because the causal relationship in question is not proved. The development might have been due in part or whole to quite other causes, indeed may have been in spite of "tariff assimilation"; and, moreover, there is no evidence to show that a similar or perchance a greater development might have taken place even had there been no assimilation. A closer analysis supports and even strengthens this opposite conclusion, and shows the protectionist argument to be ill-founded. As was often pointed out, West Africa and Indo-China and Madagascar, which were practically

<sup>19</sup> For instance, powerful colonial congresses in 1906, 1907, 1909, 1912, 1921 and 1925 opposed the law, and the Institut Colonial de Marseille was directly inaugurated to further this end.

non-existent at the time of the law of 1892, have contributed most of the increase, and the colonies affected by the assimilation *régime* have not prospered as much as the free colonies like West Africa and Morocco.

A detailed survey of the colonies since 1892 supports the position that "tariff assimilation," if it has not failed, has at least been a retarding influence. It has kept back the colonies under its regulations as compared with others<sup>20</sup>: it has not increased the share of France in colonial imports to any marked degree: and it has imposed growing burdens on the colonies and their development. Instead of converting the colonies into markets for French goods, assimilation has often raised prices up to that level at which foreign goods could compete (in New Caledonia, for instance): or, where geographical conditions have forced the colonies to take French products (as in Madagascar and the sugar-islands), the consumer has had to pay more, and the resultant redistribution of the capital in each colony, and the limits imposed on the total trade turnover, have gravely diminished the budget-receipts. One cannot point to any individual colony and say that, *there*, assimilation has directly benefited the colony to a greater degree than free-trade would have done; and the statistics show, on the other hand, that what development there has been has taken place not because of, but in spite of, the application of the extreme protectionist system. The development has been a tribute rather to the resources of the colony in question than to the wisdom of the metropolitan fiscal policy. The justice of this contention is seen from the fact that the only colonies which have been able to recover from the blow have been the larger ones, with their greater natural resources: the smaller ones, having no such reserves on which to draw, have been simply ruined. For them, in Girault's phrase, "tariff assimilation was deliberately devised misery."<sup>21</sup>

There is practically no exception to the statement that assimilation ruined the lesser colonies of France. St. Pierre et Miquelon, a tiny peninsula on the Canadian coast, by being artificially isolated from the American continent and placed under rules made for France, lost two-thirds of its trade and a third of its population in twenty years of the new *régime*, and had to be "unassimilated" in 1911, as the only alternative was extinction.<sup>22</sup> The sugar-islands of the Caribbean were in a similar plight and for similar reasons, as they naturally fell within the orbit of

<sup>20</sup> *Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1909, p. 318; Mathon's *Report to Congrès Colonial de Marseilles*, 1906.

<sup>21</sup> See detailed analysis in Girault (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 174 *et seq.*, or *Compte Rendu des Travaux du Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1906, tariff section, p. 215 *et seq.*; or *Congrès de l'Institut Colonial de Marseille*, 1925, p. 51 *et seq.*

<sup>22</sup> *Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1909, p. 351 *et seq.*; *Journal Officiel*, *Déps.*, 24/3/11, 4/7/11.

the American market. Hard-hit as they already were by the competition of beet-sugar, they have remained stagnant since 1890, only the intrinsic richness of the groups preventing a positive decline. The only result of "tariff assimilation" there has been to increase French imports by one-third at the cost of a corresponding increase in prices, which entailed a reduction of the total amount of trade (nearly a 50 per cent. fall between 1888 and 1907), and a consequent falling-off of budget-receipts. The general equilibrium of colonial existence in Martinique and Guadeloupe was upset by a disturbing influence at one stage, and consequently the whole movement was deranged.<sup>23</sup> Even an official report of 1911 made this clear in saying that, "while, thanks to the customs duties, foreign merchandise is practically ousted from the local market, the budget of the colony is becoming impoverished." This in turn meant new taxes and more mulcting of the producer,—so much so that relief had to be afforded in 1914 by admitting the island-sugar into France free of duty, a concession which really meant that, to maintain her protectionist policy at one end, France had to give large bounties at the other.<sup>24</sup> In the Pacific, New Caledonia told a similar tale, and indeed suffered more than any other colony except St. Pierre et Miquelon. The island has a sub-temperate climate and can be settled by Europeans, and its conditions are very similar to those of the adjacent Australian mainland, with which it naturally trades. Assimilation of this isolated island at the Antipodes meant a great increase in the cost of living, because the colonists had to pay for Australian products plus the duty, as France could not supply the necessary commodities. Without in the least aiding French imports, assimilation here has increased the burdens of the settlers and has simply meant an insensate handicap on the development of a new country. But France would not face the obvious facts, and, despite a proposed change in 1912, has continued to sacrifice this temperate colony at the altar of an inapplicable principle.<sup>25</sup>

The lesson of all the lesser colonies is alike, but it should be remembered that all of them are so situated geographically (all are really isolated *enclaves* attached to, and meaningless apart from, foreign economic spheres), as to afford no real test for the policy of "tariff assimilation": they only afford another proof of the illogical nature of French colonial methods. So it is only by examining the larger colonies, which are economic entities in themselves, that valid conclusions may be reached. On the other hand, the smaller colonies are important, as showing the interpretation given to the theory. Ferry, at once a protectionist and a

<sup>23</sup> *Institut Colonial de Marseille. Congrès Douanier Colonial, 1925, p. 428.*

<sup>24</sup> Girault (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 174 *et seq.*

<sup>25</sup> Paper by Simon in *Congrès des Anciennes Colonies, 1909, p. 234.*



colonial, had supported the law of 1892 only because the power it conferred of making exceptions to the rule gave it the necessary elasticity in operation. "It has never entered the mind of any reasonable man," he said at the time of the passage of the law, "to transport the tariffs of the metropolis *en bloc* to this distant domain, scattered in all parts of the world and in all habitable latitudes. That is a caricature of the new *régime*, and not a healthy and loyal application of it."<sup>26</sup> And yet the above instances show that that is precisely what happened, and that the emphasis came to be on a rigid application of the general principle,—on a grotesque caricature, in fact. Ferry's idea had been to compensate for the accidents of geographical disadvantages by allowing exemptions from the general rule: whereas in actual practice, France ignored these disadvantages and allowed no exemption unless, as in Oceania, geography made the collection of customs an absolute absurdity. The law of 1892 knew, and knows, no elasticity: it was not a flexible link easing with the course of development and the peculiar conditions of each colony, but a rigid iron band forbidding all adaptation to changing circumstances.

Of the larger colonies, Madagascar is perhaps the most typical, because, assimilated in 1897, two years after its conquest, it has practically been under the assimilation *régime* throughout the whole of its existence. Here, the most obvious result of the system was definitely to capture the island's trade for France. It is true that the gain was rather to France's pride than to either French traders or the natives, because the heavy tariffs have hindered the development of commerce. As Girault says, clearly "the economic policy of France in Madagascar aimed far more at supplanting the English trade than at developing the external commerce of the colony."<sup>27</sup> The result was that trade was practically stagnant for the ten years after 1897, although France came to have two-thirds of the exports and practically the whole of the import trade. But, apart from the inordinately slow development, what was the cost of this victory? Customs receipts rapidly fell, because there were no foreign goods coming in, and French goods did not pay duty: therefore, there had to be additional taxation. And, as these were consumption-taxes, falling on French and foreign goods alike, the cost of living rose rapidly. Madagascar was following a vicious circle: natives, colonists, and government all suffered, and the development of the group was restricted, the only profit accruing to the French cotton-manufacturers. Clearly, if Madagascar represented a victory for the protectionists, it was a Pyrrhic one, and it would have been infinitely

<sup>26</sup> In Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>27</sup> Girault (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 216 *et seq.*; *Compte Rendu du Congrès Colonial de Marseille*, 1906, Vol. II, p. 206 (July).

cheaper for the French Government to have given a free gift to the cotton-manufacturers of their profits, for, as cotton-fabrics comprise 50 per cent. of the imports of Madagascar, they would have had the compensation of a prospering country.<sup>28</sup>

Indo-China did not suffer as much as Madagascar, largely because of the proximity of China and the dependence of the country on the single staple of rice.<sup>29</sup> Under the circumstances, "tariff assimilation" was not so much a mortal blow as an annoying hindrance to be overcome. Indo-Chinese native tastes being as they are, the country is largely an economic world in itself: internal trade is all that concerns the average Annamite: he buys few foreign goods, and so is little, if at all, affected by the duty and the subsequent rise of prices. He simply goes without. For the rest, the bulk of the exports (rice and silk) go to China, and thus French tariffs could not adversely affect the colony as they did, say, the sugar-islands. The self-sufficiency of the Indo-Chinese world triumphed over French protection. Nor did the State suffer because, the taxation system being based on indirect taxes and an *ad val.* basis, receipts varied with imports: and these continually increased,—fivefold between 1888 and 1911,—because the general prosperity of the native was increasing with the development under the French. The import-duty, under these conditions, was simply a fair tax; it was instead of, and not supplementary to, direct taxes. Local conditions and Doumer's system of indirect taxes, therefore, prevented the stagnation that was inevitable in the other colonies. But how much more or less the gain would have been under a free-trade system is a moot point: certainly, France has not captured this import market, for her share rose only from a fifth to a third of the whole (1888–1911), and a great proportion of this included material for the ambitious programme of public works after 1898. As in Madagascar, the only positive gain was in capturing the textile-trade for the French; and to offset this, Indo-China, more so than any other colony, was roused to antagonistic activity by the French tariff, and vigorously developed her own industries, especially in Tonkin.<sup>30</sup> France fully paid for the small trade advantage by the pin-pricks given to the natives, and by the awakening of the teeming millions of slumbering Annamites into a passive resistance. Moreover, as minor but troublesome additions to this side of the ledger, were the handicaps imposed on the great port of Saigon, the question of smuggling through Laos, the friction

<sup>28</sup> A. Artaud, *Introduction à la Révision du Régime Douanier des Colonies Françaises* (1925), p. 38, published by Institut Colonial de Marseille; *Congrès du Régime Douanier Colonial*, 1925, p. 51 *et seq.*

<sup>29</sup> R. Ferry, *Le Régime Douanier de l'Indo-Chine* (1912), p. 36 *et seq.*

<sup>30</sup> Artaud (1925), *op. cit.*, p. 24 *et seq.*; *Congrès du Régime Douanier Colonial*, 1925, p. 485. The valuable Sambric Report on Indo-China is in p. 470.

with Siam and China, and a retarded development of the waterways of the peninsula. But, at most, the loss was potential rather than actual, and certainly the natives did not suffer under the system.

From this survey, it is clear that none of the assimilated colonies could be adduced as a direct protectionist triumph, with a prosperity at least equal to that which could reasonably have been expected under a free-trade *régime*. On the other hand, the two non-assimilated territories of West Africa and Morocco were definite free-trade victories. West Africa was in much the same position as Indo-China,—a rich, well-peopled, self-sufficient land. Once the separatism of the coastal districts had been dispelled by the occupation of the common *hinterland* and the essential unity of West Africa revealed, progress was rapid and consistent, commerce almost quadrupling in the fifteen years after 1895. Both French and foreign trade have increased proportionately, the share of France, a half of both exports and imports, remaining in 1910 what it was in 1895. The commercial liberty of West Africa has thus benefited both French and foreigners, the increase being more noticeable than in the case of Madagascar, and relatively even than that of Indo-China. No other colony presented a similar expansion of trade: the natives prospered: customs revenues doubled between 1904 and 1911: and there was a healthy outlook in every direction, an outlook based on the firm foundation of numerous agricultural staples. Again, despite the failure to capture the textile market, that bourne so consistently sought in French colonization, the French industrialists gained to a greater total amount, and at least to a greater degree, relatively, than other Powers or in most of the assimilated colonies. The gains, that is, were evenly distributed, and there was no reverse side to the medal, as there was in the case even of the successful assimilated colonies.

The lesson of Morocco was even clearer; because there, France had not only to face "the open door," but the firmly entrenched position of England. Yet the total trade increased sixfold between 1900 and 1912; the exports gained on the imports; Morocco became the third of the French colonies from the point of view of trade (despite the continued uncertainty and the independence of at least a third of the country); and France came to control 64.5 per cent. of the imports and 52.4 per cent. of the exports (1925), an increase of almost 50 per cent. since 1912,—satisfactory results from any approach to the question.

The conclusion, then, is that the assimilated colonies were either held back or ruined, save where they had a natural richness sufficient to counteract the blows of "tariff assimilation"; while, on the other hand, the non-assimilated colonies (save for the completely undeveloped Congo,

the Cinderella of the French colonies) uniformly progressed.<sup>21</sup> It is not clear whether a moderate protectionist policy, as in Indo-China, would have produced similar results to the free-trade policy; but it can with certainty be said the assimilated colonies would not have been so backward under a *régime* of trade liberty. Construed as a rigidly inflexible and extreme protectionism, "tariff assimilation" undoubtedly hampered the development of the French colonies. It almost invariably produced stagnation, and, save in Madagascar, the French lacked even the satisfaction of capturing the desired markets. In general, there was a small increase, but the policy usually meant that the colonist or native still went to the foreigner and paid the duty as an extra tax restricting his purchases in other directions. The only absolute gain was to the French textile-industry, and this was dearly bought. Apart from this purely local gain, the policy hindered development and secured no adequate result.

It could not be said, therefore, that "tariff assimilation" had succeeded, nor that France had even gained the colonial markets, at however sacrificial a cost. Before assimilation, she commanded 40 per cent. of the import-trade of her colonies, and by 1913 this had increased to only 54.5 per cent., and the ratio was declining. France had neglected the geographical factors of the situation, and had forgotten that Indo-China naturally falls within the economic zone of China, the Antilles in America, New Caledonia in Australia, and Madagascar in Africa. This fact of geographical propinquity not all the protectionist systems in the world could overcome: and when France moulded the whole of her colonial system on an uncompromising denial of the implications of this geographical fact, she was condemning her colonies to comparative stagnation. One fact alone—the needs of the manufacturers of the east of France—had been taken into account, and the whole French Empire had to pay the cost.

So clear was the situation when colonial facts came to be studied scientifically in the later nineties that there was a definite reaction against the ultra-protectionist system, the modified *Pacte Colonial*, on which the *régime* of "tariff assimilation" was based. Quite apart from general arguments in Paris on the plane of abstract economics, the deciding factors came from the development of the colonies themselves. The rapid growth from the nineties onwards made changes of organization inevitable, and, from 1892 at least, there was a distinct movement for decentralization along the lines of budgetary autonomy, a trend which naturally came to involve tariff autonomy. The first gap in the system

<sup>21</sup> This is the conclusion of Girault (1916, p. 280) and each of the Congresses cited above.

of "tariff assimilation" was made when it was recognized that the individual colony had a sufficiently separate existence to justify a local budget, especially with a people like the French, the whole of whose colonial system had been built on a negation of centrifugal and decentralizing tendencies.<sup>32</sup> This recognition was undoubtedly the turning-point in the economic history of the French colonies, as its cession opened up vistas of reform which, carried to their logical implications, would transform the entire colonial system.

The movement for financial autonomy was in itself an old one. Genty de Bussy, in the report of the Algerian Commission of 1833, had proposed a special budget, and, from that year, the sugar-colonies (save for the assimilation interlude of 1841-1854) had a budget of their own, voted by the colonial council. At this early stage, the idea was clearly not to develop the colonies but to save France expense, and it was not until the law of April 13, 1900, that the principle itself was conceded, and from the colony's point of view. In introducing the new project, Joseph Caillaux, the Minister of Finance, held that each colony should be considered "as a distinct unit, having its own resources and its own interests, and becoming organized in proportion to the extent of its development."<sup>33</sup> Granting this premise, economic autonomy in every branch was only a matter of time, for Caillaux's declaration really amounted to a recognition of the principle of a progressive self-government in economic matters. Hereafter, the colony was an economic entity, paying all save its military expenses and managing its own financial life: and, conceding this, tariff autonomy was logically inevitable. Either the idea of 1892 or that of 1900 was erroneous, for the implications of both could not logically be carried out. The underlying principles were diametrically opposed: decentralization and economic autonomy were meaningless if, at the same time, centripetal tendencies and the economic subordination of 1892 were upheld. France, by sanctioning both, had to choose between them, and the point was that, while the interests of the mother-country had been taken into account both in 1892 and 1900, the colonies had really been non-existent as distinct units at the former date, but had so developed in the interim that their interests and demands were clear.

At the same time as the decentralizing tendency was growing in the economic sphere, a reaction could be discerned against the system of extreme protection in itself. This found its first coherent expression in the resolutions of the Colonial Congress of 1906, which declared against

<sup>32</sup> *Le Matin* (Paris), 6/8/09.

<sup>33</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Depts., 17/5/99, 15/12/99, for debates. See Chap. XVI, III, *infra*.

any attempt to lock up colonial markets.<sup>34</sup> Clementel, Caillaux, Guieysse, and Deloncle, all authorities of note, said that the colonies were dying because they were being linked to France too closely. "Their organs are constricted by the tight corset of ultra-protectionism," cried Clementel, and his protests found an even more unanimous support at the Congress of the Old Colonies in 1909. This Congress openly claimed a tariff autonomy, or at least reciprocity, because the existing system was worse than the old *Pacte Colonial*.<sup>35</sup> The *Pacte* at least was a contract, and gave the colonies a market for their goods: the "tariff assimilation" of 1892, because, as has been seen, it stopped short of that complete reciprocity which alone was logical or just, did not, and was decried as being based on a colonial ideal more backward and more incomplete even than that of Montesquieu and the Physiocrats! Then again, its rigidity and uniformity were quite impractical policies in an Empire as scattered as that of France. "Its uniformity," reported the president of the tariff section at the Conference of 1909, "is an absurd thing, and to wish the *régime* of 1892 to be applied to French colonies in all latitudes, is as logical as if we were to decree to-day that all Frenchmen should wear a *coutil* in winter in our equatorial colonies!" Variation, according to the position and requirements of each colony, was demanded as the basis of any workable system: to argue otherwise was to sacrifice fact to theory, and to base the policy on what was desired rather than what was possible.

Most reformers did not want to force the pace, and stopped short of hastening to a complete "autonomy" or independence, economically speaking: what they wanted was a policy varying between the colonies and proportioned to the peculiarities of each. Whether the policy was determined by the Paris *bureaux* or the local councils was more or less immaterial. The source of the policy did not count, so long as it was one based on a recognition that each colony was an entity in itself, and had special problems of its own. The move was mainly away from the rigidity of the existing law, which obviously could not be a correct or just solution for so many radically different problems: and it was towards some *via media* which, while satisfying the homeland and proving at least palatable to the colonies, should vary between colony and colony. The entire emphasis was on the difference between the colonies and not the massing of all of them in the generic term "colonies," which, under the conditions, meant nothing, except a proof that the position was misunderstood. The only feature in common in the economic life of New Caledonia and the French Congo and Indo-China was the tricolour;

<sup>34</sup> *Compte Rendu du Congrès Colonial de Marseille*, 1906, Vol. II.

<sup>35</sup> *Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1909, p. 323 et seq.

and the reformers argued that a more satisfactory basis of organization than the existing one could be found.

To show that they wanted a recognition of the variations between the colonies, and yet were not enamoured of extreme or impolitic schemes of autonomy, the colonial representatives coined the ingenious phrase, "tariff personality," to represent the goal they sought. The law of 1900 had given financial personality (without a complete financial independence): why, therefore, could not the law be changed so as to allow a tariff-personality, which was distinct from "tariff autonomy," a goal obviously beyond the needs of the early twentieth century, when the interests of the central French organism had to be taken into account so much.

The view-point of the reformers and their economic arguments were best summed up by the declarations of the Colonial Congress of Marseilles in 1906, the best documented and most convincing work on the economic organization of the colonies. The Congress agreed <sup>36</sup>—and this still represents the present situation—that

"the best *régime* to adopt would be that which—

- "1. Would renounce the unification and systematic centralization which the experience of the application of the 1892 law has shown impossible of realization.
- "2. Would definitely abandon the false principle of the economic subordination of the colonies to the metropolis, in recognizing that the true interest of the metropolis lay in the economic development of the colonies.
- "3. Would decree the autonomy of each colony or group of colonies from an economic point of view, and would regulate their tariff-*régime* to their best interests by considering the reforms and conditions enumerated:—
  - "A. Hearing the colony's claims for the measures and taxes which it deems the most favourable for the development of its wealth.
  - "B: The granting of these measures by the metropolis in decrees, while reserving to the metropolis her general economic interests.
  - "C. Fixing a certain period for the *régime* thus established, in order to allow the measures to take full effect, and to enable those interested to profit from them as much as possible.
- "4. Would permit the small colonies, by groupings in governments-general, to preserve local influences in claiming the measures and taxes most suitable for the development of their resources."

Behind this somewhat cumbrous terminology, it will be noted that there is nothing unduly iconoclastic or visionary: indeed, the recommendations do not go beyond the fields of variation and reciprocity,—a commendable restraint which was the best proof of the validity of the

<sup>36</sup> *Compte Rendu du Congrès Colonial de Marseille*, 1906, Vol. II, app. x.; or *Congrès du Régime Douanier Colonial*, 1925, p. 289.

reformers' position. This general position was supported by the Colonial Congress of Bordeaux in 1907, by the above-mentioned Congress of the Old Colonies in 1909, by the various Chambers of Commerce, and by the vociferous colonial party.<sup>37</sup> As a result, an extra-parliamentary commission was appointed in 1909, but after many delays the Carrière Report, giving its conclusions, declared in favour of assimilation as the guiding principle. It will be remembered that this was in the midst of the period of lethargy, and it was not politic to attempt any root-and-branch reforms of the colonial organization at this juncture.<sup>38</sup> But, as a counterblast to this anæmic report, the Paris Chamber of Commerce, in a carefully worded resolution, opposed assimilation, both politically and economically, and, maintaining that "the régime of 1892 has checked the development of the colonies and has impoverished them," outlined a policy akin to what has been called "tariff personality."<sup>39</sup>

The position thus arrived at, from the colonial point of view, was the more obvious because the bases of the metropolitan argument had crumbled; and thus there was, as it were, an internal as well as external attack on the assimilation régime. The law of 1892 had been built on the twin foundations of colonial subordination and assimilation in every branch; and, of these two, the first had been at least somewhat limited by the new self-assertion of the colonies, and the latter had absolutely broken down. Assimilation, both as regards political and native affairs, had been revealed as a complete failure, as unworkable in practice as it was undesirable in theory. Therefore, since economic assimilation had been introduced largely as a corollary of these two, and on the same philosophical basis, one of its main justifications was now removed, and the position was that, if the policy did not square with the facts, then it had no more *raison d'être* than any other policy. It had, in a word, lost its wider philosophical support, and its fate had now to be decided in the more controversial world of economic facts and statistics. Thus, just as political assimilation was seen to be shackling and unwise, and just as native assimilation was shown as an unrealizable chimera, so now economic assimilation was revealed as the reverse of logical, and, while not impracticable in itself, unwise for all concerned.<sup>40</sup> The assimilation trilogy, beautifully symmetrical triumph of the combined logic and philosophy of the revolutionary reformer as it was, simply fell apart and dissolved, as its basis could not find a support in hard fact.



After the strictures of the Colonial Congress of 1900, the French Empire was no longer viewed as a great amorphous mass to be organized into a symmetrical uniformity, but as a union of distinct parts, different, and desirably different, between themselves, especially from an economic point of view. How, therefore, could one rigid and inflexible tariff system apply with equal fairness to a loose union of such disparate parts? Logic pointed in exactly the opposite direction, and, as the basic premises of the French colonial syllogism had thus changed, so too did the entire chain of argument. Assimilation was discredited, and the political and economic theorists, the slaves of logic, tended more and more to emphasize variation within the central organization.

All of these tendencies united in a demand for change,<sup>41</sup>—a demand which was just becoming effective when the war of 1914 changed the situation. The first victory was when the "half-duties" imposed on the goods of the sugar-colonies (sugar, tea, coffee, etc.) were abolished in August, 1913.<sup>42</sup> The planters objected to being "treated as French when they buy and as half-French when they sell." But the significant feature was not so much the passage of the law as the strength of the opposition to it. It was only after the fourth attempt that even this meagre concession was obtained, and financial experts and liberal economists joined in opposing it.<sup>43</sup> The result was that a kindred proposition to relieve the distressed New Caledonia by "unassimilating" it was rejected outright, and the adherents of assimilation proposed to follow up this victory by even swelling the ranks of the assimilated colonies by adding Senegal and Guinea.

Despite the experience of Morocco, the reformers were thus effectively checkmated, and the issue was still undecided in 1914, although the theory of colonial subordination remained in the ascendant. The colonies, developed as they were, were still conceived to derive their economic life from France, and the old ghost of colonial competition had in no sense been laid. "Industrial colonization," that is, the manufacturing of raw materials within the colonies themselves, was still anathema, and the pronouncements of policy on the topic might equally as well, (as in 1892), have been uttered by Diderot or Montesquieu. For instance, in 1905, Doumer, an ex-Governor-General of Indo-China and an advanced radical, said that "the installation of industries must only be encouraged there to the extent to which they can do no harm to metropolitan industries. The latter must be complemented and not ruined by the former. In

<sup>41</sup> See the documents in Artaud (1925), *op. cit.*, Chap. 8, from each colony.

<sup>42</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 6/8/13, for bill. Smaller victories had previously been obtained by bills of 24/3/10 and 31/3/11. See Artaud (1925), pp. 155-158.

<sup>43</sup> Compare attacks in *Paris Temps*, 19, 21/12/12; 4, 13/2/13.

other words, colonial industry is to do what French industry cannot do,—to send products where metropolitan industry cannot go.”<sup>44</sup> The colonial theory of 1914 could not be more aptly summarized.

There was still as much centralization in policy as there had been twenty years before, at the dawn of the expansionist period, and the only difference was that, whereas formerly the idea was to benefit the mother-country alone, it was now conceded that the benefit might be reciprocal. But still, the assumption was that the first obligation was to aid the mother-country. The theory of colonial parasitism had been modified to the degree that it was no longer deemed to be advisable to keep the colonies in a permanently weak state. “On the contrary,” wrote Jules Harmand in 1910, “if we propose to make our possessions produce (*for the interest of the metropolis, it is true*) as much as possible, we conceive this result only by the development of their own future, by their material prosperity, and by the satisfaction of the needs and aspirations of their own peoples.”<sup>45</sup> The basic idea remained the same: it was only the method that had changed, and only incidentally that the colonies gained.

This recognition of the need for colonial growth was the more necessary, because the problem was changing in the early years of this century. The rallying-cry of “markets” of Ferry’s time was giving way to the somewhat uneasy demand for “raw materials,” especially for tropical products. The problem now was not so much to sell goods as to make them,—not to secure the import-trade of the colonies but their exports. This was where the real difficulty lay, and that was why the attacks on “tariff assimilation” were so important,—not because of assimilation in itself, but because that policy tended to retard the development of the colonies and to keep them in a state of permanent debility. The capture of colonial markets began to have quite a new interpretation. Of four milliard francs of colonial produce imported to France in 1913, nine-tenths came from foreign colonies, especially such products as ground-nuts, copra, rubber, cotton and silk, all of which the French colonies could grow. Japan secured all the cotton of Cambodia, yet France had to buy 33,000 tons of Indian cotton every year! The silks of Tonkin went abroad, Congo timbers went to Hamburg, the rubber of West Africa was directed towards Antwerp and Liverpool, and Hamburg monopolized the skins and leathers of Madagascar. The colonial system was thus out of joint, and really functioned, so far as meeting French needs went, only as regards food-stuffs from North Africa. The breakdown in supplying cotton and rubber were positive national fatalities, for, as France

<sup>44</sup> P. Doumer, *L'Indo-Chine Française* (1905), p. 360.

<sup>45</sup> J. Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, p. 11.

depended on foreigners for 80 per cent. of her needs in these two raw materials, the position was deplorable.

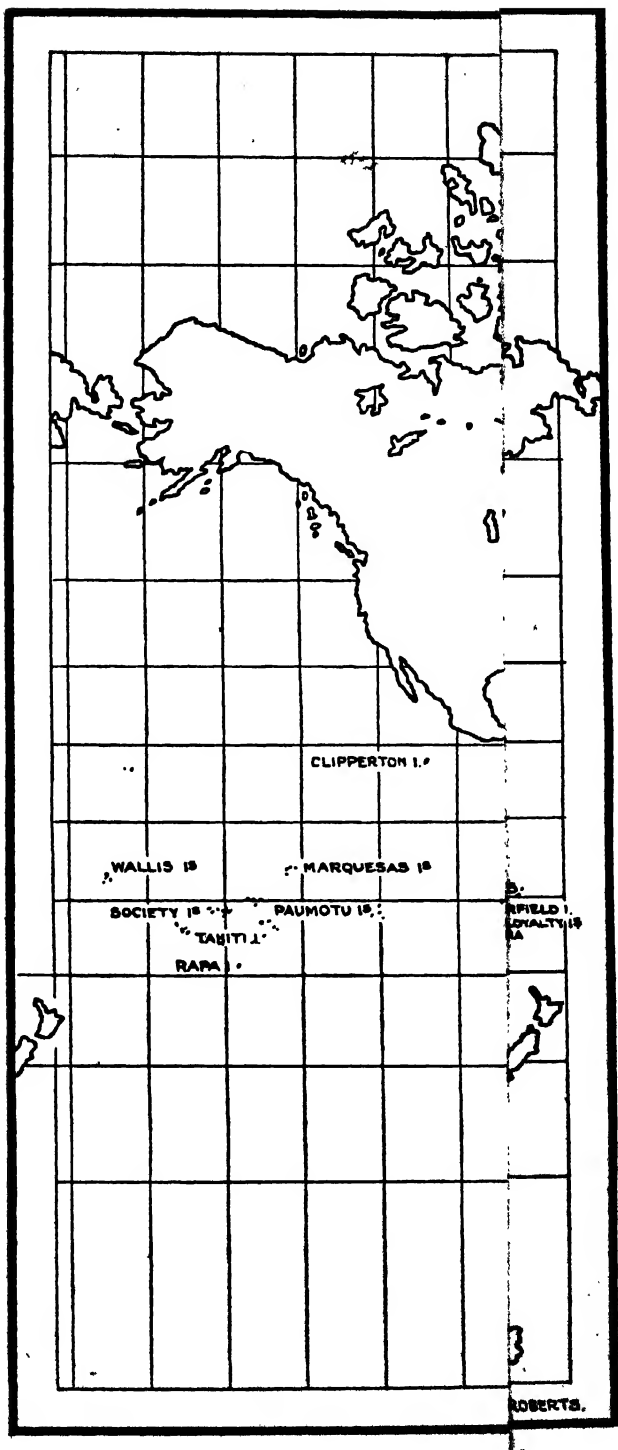
By 1914, therefore, the problem was receiving a new orientation, and the events of the war hastened and made inevitable the perception of the weaknesses of the situation. France's economic policy in the colonies had secured neither a commensurate colonial development nor economic security for the nation. It had in effect been a class policy for the manufacturers of the north and east. The newer policy, on the other hand, was based on national considerations, and the fight over assimilation, which had been so pronounced from 1906 to 1913, also changed its form because of the war.

After that, especially because of Sarraut's *mise en valeur* policy in 1921, there was a reaction to an outright protectionism and an increased (but again newly interpreted) subordination of the colonies to the needs of France.<sup>46</sup> But there was also the clear understanding that the determining factor was no longer the needs of French industrialists but of the nation as a whole, and also that the objects of both France and the colonies could *only* be achieved by the development of the colonies to the uttermost. The old bogie of "competition" had gone,<sup>47</sup> and the movement for "tariff personality" much abated, because now the idea was for the specialized development of each colony as part of a great organism,—the French Colonial Empire. Each cell was considered not for its personality, or for its all-round development, but was regarded solely as a part of the whole. However, this was clearly not a reaction to the *Pacte Colonial* or to the stage of 1892, but to the newer idea of mutual development,—or rather, the idea of mutual interdependence in development. Each colony had to develop along lines determined for it by what it could give the Empire as a whole. The organic analogy now held more than ever, because it was henceforth on the dual basis, not only of subordination to the central nerve-system, but also of the need for the healthy development of each limb. Hitherto, it had been realized that the colonies *might* prosper as well as France, now it was seen that they had to prosper, otherwise France was weakened: an organism cannot flourish with a paralysed limb.

To further this conception, the mother-country naturally accepted the idea of colonial development, while the colonies responded by accepting protection and a prescribed development along certain lines alone. The needs of the war, the post-war crisis, and then the collapse of French

<sup>46</sup> Maurice Long's striking speech to Colonial Congress of Lyon, 14-16/3/18.

<sup>47</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 3/4/21. The introduction of the "co-efficient" idea to the colonies really meant increased protection, and has been in force ever since. It varies the duty with exchange fluctuations.





finance completely changed the economic problem of the French colonies, and diverted attention from the injustice and absurdity of "tariff assimilation," which, in an even more stringent form than ever, is still in the ascendant. The cry for autonomy, which had been so noticeable in the Congress-era after 1906, was thrust into the background,<sup>48</sup> and, as in the early stages of the assimilation policy, criticism has been forestalled by surrounding the policy with an aura of patriotism, so that criticism becomes almost treason, and certainly a passive disloyalty.

The problem has changed, but centralization and subordination, always the two bases of the economic aspect of French colonization, remain as before: their interpretation may have been widened by the changing circumstances and they may not be as distinctly anti-colonial as before, but they still show that the dominant French idea is a centripetal and not centrifugal policy. Autonomy and disintegration remain outside the scope of French colonial policy, and even the peculiar conditions of each colony are utilized so as to further the well-being of the organism as a whole. And so the economic ties linking the colonies to the metropolis become stronger and narrower. France does not want a weakly knit *congeries* of self-sufficient entities, with the emphasis on an increasing devolution, but a great economic machine,—a world within a world, and with no lesser entity than the Empire as a whole. The determining ideas and principles are still those of the *Pacte*: it is only the conditions that have changed, and the colonial elements have become stronger: the *motif* is the same as ever. The subordination of the colonies has always been the principle that has unified the economic side of French colonial policy,—and, in its enwidened form, more so to-day even than in 1892.

<sup>48</sup> The plea for "tariff-personality" has been revived by the Institut Colonial de Marseille and in its numerous documentary publications. See *Congrès du Régime Douanier Colonial*, 1925, p. 270 *et seq.*

## CHAPTER III

### GENERAL POLITICAL POLICY

ON its political side, French colonial theory commenced with a definite idea of the relationships that should exist between colonies and mother-country. Four such theories were considered, but two ruled out from the first, as being either out of accord with the French temperament or uncalled-for by the circumstances. The other two, assimilation and association, were accepted during the Third Republic, the period about 1900 being the dividing line between them. But, when considering such theories, it is essential to remember that they were always kept in place, so to speak, by certain wider French view-points. Whatever the accepted theory of colonial relationships for the moment, it was the idea of colonial subordination that was always in the ascendant. The colonial problem was in essence not a problem in itself, but simply one element in the wider problem of the French nation. National interests had to have the first consideration: hence, any purely colonial theory was limited by this necessity of subordination and by the maintenance of all effective power in the hands of the central officials,—the Parisian *bureaux*. Add to these general considerations the French instinct for centralization and uniformity: and it will be readily evident why the general political side of colonial theory was never given much expression, and why the actual enfranchisement of the colonies has always been so limited. Development is not determined by the degree of colonial progress (witness the obsolete Councils of Indo-China<sup>1</sup>), but is almost entirely a reflex of the general French position. The colonies are thus denied an opportunity: their case is judged before it ever arises. The problem is never interpreted as a colonial one, never considered on its own merits: hence the gap that almost always exists between colonial theory and colonial practice in France.

#### I. French Theories of Colonial Relationships

French theory<sup>2</sup> recognizes four types of colonial relationships, each

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. XI, *infra*.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. in *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National, 1889-1890*, Vol. I, p. 16, Vol. II, p. 14 *et seq.* (Isaac Report); or Girault, 4th edition (1921), Part I, p. 66 *et seq.*

vested with somewhat artificial attributes,—subjection (*assujétissement*), autonomy, assimilation, and association. The first of these is simply government by and for the metropolis, and is supposed to consider the interests of the mother-country alone. Government is rigidly kept under central control, representation of colonial interests is unknown, the very concept of separate colonial interests is denied, and economic life is developed only in those directions that will yield a profit for the metropolis. In brief, the *Pacte Colonial* is in its full heyday, and the colony is viewed as a plantation to be exploited, not as a developing society. The French take the Dutch colonies as representing this type, but, unless the example is limited to the East Indies of the days of the “culture” system, that is, before about 1875, it loses any historical point. A colony of “subjection” is, at present, rather a case of what has happened in the past and what might possibly, but not probably, occur again in the future. It is an extreme rather than a type. What significance this type of colony possesses at the present juncture thus arises, not from its practical importance, but because the mode of thought which produced such exploitation in the past tends in part to linger and to shape colonial evolution. It represents a tendency, a way of looking at things, an almost subconscious force that colours colonial action, but not a practicable code in itself. The tariff *régime* of the French colonies, for instance, is determined by this notion of colonial subordination, as also is the ban on political enfranchisement by the denial of separate colonial interests. Up till recently, too, the *refoulement* of the Algerians and Pacific Islanders was a direct outcome of this point of view. Indeed, it might with accuracy be asserted that, since 1870, the “subjection” point of view has been more typical of French colonial effort than of Dutch.

The second form of development is assumed by the French to be particularly English,—to be almost a reflex of the exaggerated individualism of English institutions. As exemplified by the British Dominions, this form of autonomy allows the maximum self-government, both in political and economic matters.<sup>3</sup> The colony is viewed as a distinct society, bound by sentiment to the motherland, it is true, but developing in the light of its own personality and *milieu*. As soon as a sufficient stage of development is reached, responsible government is conceded by the mother-country, and is interpreted as embracing a gradually widening range of functions. The colony is viewed as a separate microcosm living its own life, and influenced by the parent organism only in so far as its growth is determined by the general laws to which the family of organisms

<sup>3</sup> Girault, “Rapports politiques entre métropole et colonies,” in *Institut Colonial International*, 1903 session, p. 371.



in question is subject. Beyond this similarity, or predisposition to similarity, of development, there is little direct connection between parent and offspring, in the shape of consciously directed growth. Indeed, a diverse development, due either to modifications of the national temperament under the new conditions or to the general environment, may even be deemed desirable: whereas, under the French system, such a variation is viewed as failure, and almost as something inconceivable. As opposed to this, autonomy to the English means development and even difference to the degree to which it becomes anti-social or positively secessionist. Within these limits, its extent is determined almost entirely by the rate of the colony's progress. If the colony can institute representative and later responsible government, the concession is given voluntarily and is not ruled out of court by *a priori* considerations or by the interests of a manufacturing class in the metropolis, both of which forces have prevented similar developments with the French colonies. Moreover, responsible government, the principle of which was accepted by England in 1840, is viewed as something elastic. At first, it was simply interpreted as a right of controlling the executive and voting taxes, but certain fundamental matters (land, for instance) were retained by the central British Government. Gradually, however, the departments thus retained were transferred to colonial control. In this manner, emigration, tariffs, and even the right of making commercial treaties with foreign Powers were conceded, to the degree to which they did not conflict with Imperial safety. All of these issues had been decided when France really commenced to organize her new Empire, so that the British experience was there clearly for her to see. Certain Australian States were already discriminating against British goods and were demanding that policy should be determined by their interests alone even where, as with the case of Chinese immigration into New South Wales, the policy so desired was in direct conflict with Great Britain's general diplomacy.<sup>4</sup>

As it developed in the British Dominions, autonomy thus meant parallel rather than controlled development, and in particular, development without rigid limits. Both of these features were opposed to the French conception of colonization, which might practically be described as the imposition of shackles on colonial development and the compression of even the limited development allowed into a frame shaped by the permanent officials of the Rue Oudinot. Development is both circumscribed and predetermined: there is nothing unlimited or even natural about it. These two features reappear again and again in French colonial practice, even in the last few years when, theoretically speaking, associa-

<sup>4</sup> A. B. Keith, *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, Vol. II, p. 1003 *et seq.*

tion or collaboration has been the accepted form of development. Elasticity, adaptability to varying circumstances, local variations,—indeed, everything that autonomy stands for, are all restricted under the French system. The English retain certain basic principles and allow the actual rules for each colony to vary with circumstances, so long as the spirit of the principle remains intact; whereas the French, when confronted by a similar multiple problem of colonization, endeavour to make the rule, and even the text, exactly the same in each province, even if, by so doing, they infringe, or perhaps completely eradicate, the basic principle. The form is triumphant, the letter counts more than the spirit. Hence arises that artificiality which characterizes French policy,—that spurious uniformity which is the negation of administrative adaptability. What they view as the triumph of colonization, namely the reduction of colonial affairs to a uniform code, is really the condemnation of their efforts. The interests of their charges, and even their own interest, are subordinated to this shibboleth.

That explains why they have always refused to evolve in the direction of autonomy, even in the case of colonies like Algeria, which have a large European population; and why they adhered for so long to the quite different system of assimilation. Assimilation, which means the preservation of the dried bones of the Encyclopædists long after they should have dissolved into dust, is officially defined as “that system which tends to efface all difference between the colonies and the motherland, and which views the colonies simply as a prolongation of the mother-country beyond the seas.”<sup>5</sup> This implies that the peculiar organization of the colonies is reduced to a minimum. As far as possible, everything follows French models, and, save where geographical conditions positively necessitate change, the colony is regulated in precisely the same way as a *département* in mainland France. It is represented in Paris just as a department is: it is administered through the usual organs and by the same forms: it has the same laws, the same official hierarchy, the same local councils, the same tribunals, and the same *minutiae* of government. Nothing is different. The aim is to extend the old organization and to adapt the new circumstances to it rather than to create a new one or to adapt the old one to the changed conditions. Conditions might be different, but the *Code Napoléon* goes on for ever! And, if it does not fit, the fault is with the natives, not the code! Let them conform or hear the other agent of French colonization, the rattle of the mitrailleuse! The official, a true product of the rigid educational system of France and thinking no thought save in terms of the official hierarchy, sees only these alternatives; and that was the spirit in which France sought to

<sup>5</sup> Isaac Report to Congress of 1889, *op. cit.*, p. 14; Girault, Part I, pp. 71–73.

govern her Empire before 1900, and in which, theory notwithstanding, she attempts, to a large extent, to do to-day.\*

In theory, assimilation means that there are no separate services for the colonies. The army is the same, the colonial administrative corps is but an extension of the metropolitan, and the Parisian Ministries extend their action to the colonies as to the Midi or Picardy. Colonial departments are "attached" to the metropolis and, instead of being grouped under one Minister of the Colonies, are divided amongst the various Ministers according to their nature. Thus, colonial budget-matters go to the Minister of Finance, legal questions to the Minister of Justice, details of civil administration to the Minister of the Interior, and so on. The system of *rattachements* which Algeria had from 1878 to 1895 is carried to its logical limit,<sup>7</sup> and the conquest of a new colony simply means the addition of a new department to the administrative system. The Minister of the Colonies, if he exists at all under this system, is more a connecting link than a direct administrator: he is a liaison-officer or a magnified clerk, useful to index the letters concerning colonial matters but a *fainéant* as regards the decision of policy. In brief, the need for a separate colonial organization is not admitted, or, where it creeps in, as it must do in practice, is ignored as an exception to the general rule.

The same point of view applies to the natives. The aim with them is to inculcate the civilization of France and to convert them into pinch-beck Frenchmen, revelling in the cultural and legal traditions of the metropolis. The spirit of Revolution and the glories of the *Code Civil*, cravats and family restriction, and all the other characteristics of France are to transform them: whether these suit them as well as their nakedness, their own customs and savage content is another question, but one not considered by the assimilators. Is not the spirit of French civilization beyond cavil, and is not the opening of all this heritage to the Virginies and Rarahus of the jungles one of the noblest gestures conceivable? What could be finer and more liberal, asks the French theorist?<sup>8</sup> The natives, therefore, are to conform outwardly to French customs and, in theory, to learn to think as Frenchmen. The whole structure of native life is to be consciously re-moulded with this aim in view,—first destroyed as far as is necessary, and then built up again. Indeed, the whole theory rests on the supposition that any native population can abandon its existing civilization and modes of thought, as a snake sheds its skin,

\* Messimy's criticisms in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 5/4/11, 28/5/11: budget-speech for colonies, 1909 and 1910, or *Notre Œuvre Coloniale* (1910), p. 393 *et seq.*

<sup>7</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 11/11/96; or J. Cambon, *Le Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie* (1918), p. 13 *et seq.*

<sup>8</sup> This is exactly the point of view of the Congress of 1889. See *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National*, 1889-1890, Vol. I, p. 16 *et seq.*

and gradually absorb the new-coming customs and ideas. Destruction is to lead to construction, and the goal is naturalization. Assimilation, as it affects the natives, thus means a myöpic idealism that would convert cannibals into tropical Frenchmen. It is assimilation of Stone-Age natives to nineteenth-century Frenchmen.

Doubtless, assimilation sounds well in theory. It secures the maximum advantages for the mother-country : it gives every right to the settler overseas : it denies nothing (except the right of natural development) to the colony : and it cannot be accused of illiberalism as applied to the natives. It seems to fulfil both the material and the moral demands of colonization, and to be the very expression of colonial liberalism. And how logical it is ! And how pregnant with a naïve assumption of the ineffable superiority, the perfection almost, of the colonizing Power !

Yet in practice it operates quite differently.<sup>9</sup> It is only a theory and never becomes more than one. Formulated in philosophical abstractions, it fails to consider the facts of the situation. The one set of laws applies to colonies and natives as widely apart as possible. To it, geography and ethnology are factors that scarcely influence the situation. Artificial laws, suitable to no single colony, are made to apply to all alike. To an assimilator, variation is equivalent to apostasy, and all colonial development is sacrificed at the altar of a non-existent uniformity and an equally non-existent remedy. The theory is based on an abstraction, and in practice, comes to mean either a forced change or stultification, neither of which is developmental in any real sense of the word. The colonial administration, being subordinated to Paris, as Algeria was under the *rattachement* system, lacks virility and adaptability, and tends to become a lifeless officialdom. The colony itself, denied the right of natural growth and the life-saving struggle with its own difficulties, remains an artificial monstrosity, like a man fully developed physically yet with the brain of a baby. The natives, deluded for the moment by the intoxication of ultimate equality, recklessly destroy all that was vital in their own existence and find too late that the masses cannot attain the new standard and that the minority, having reached it, have forsaken their own life and yet are not admitted to the spirit of the new. The result is either a futile iconoclasm or a bitter disillusion. Assimilation thus proves illusory. Its theory seems to offer all that can be desired : its practice makes a colony stillborn, paralyses its services, and offers nothing to the native. Though outwardly the most liberal of colonial doctrines, it is in reality the worst possible, because even the theory of exploitation allows efficiency, and assimilation does not even do that.

<sup>9</sup> See the detailed analysis in Chapter IV, *infra*.

The plight of the Algerian natives up to 1900, the paralysis of administration in Algeria and Cochinchina, and the policy of tariff-assimilation after 1892 are typical instances of the practical working of the theory, and show how a colonizing Power may be cursed by a too-rigid adherence to a single theory.<sup>10</sup>

Assimilation is undoubtedly the least practical, the least progressive, and even the least humanitarian of all the theories of colonial relationship. Compared with it, even "domination" assumes desirable characteristics, because domination allows the colony to expand economically and means good treatment to the natives to the degree to which it pays. But, fortunately for the colonies and the natives, there was always a gap between theory and practice, and, even in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the heyday of the assimilators, their theory simply *could* not be enforced in practice, however unanimous might be the feeling towards it in France. The result was that, even when legislation was determined by the ideas of the assimilators, the practical application of that legislation lagged behind; and in many cases, the very idealism of the statute book, by being out of touch with the actual situation, allowed a certain subterranean development despite the theory of the day. But the impractical nature of the theory could just as easily lead to stagnation: and in neither case was there any real assimilation. Assimilation reduced itself to a mischievous arm-chair theory, and became either a cloak for stagnation or a hindrance to normal development in practice. Its good points existed only in theory, unless the opening of a largely unrealizable vista of Europeanization to the natives could be termed a good point.

As a result of this *contretemps*, the position of colonial theory had become somewhat clearer by about 1900. The French theorist usually rejected the three theories existing at that time. Domination was viewed as an anachronism and a negation of the spirit of colonization, which was now looked on as involving duties as well as returns. Autonomy was never seriously considered in France, because it was viewed as essentially an English idiosyncrasy and quite out of accord with the Gallican temperament. And assimilation, which had for long been particularly associated with French colonization, was also set aside as undesirable in theory and either inapplicable or disastrous in practice.

Destructive criticism had thus disposed of the existing theories, but it was still by no means clear in which direction the new system would develop. In an age stirred by the Congo and Indo-Chinese scandals,

<sup>10</sup> This is best proved by the position of the Antilles. Report of Congress of 1889, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 171, or important report in *Compte Rendu du Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1909, p. 203.

colonization was becoming increasingly moral,—that was the first point. We conquer only the hearts of our subjects, cried Galliéni and Messimy : we colonize, partly at least, for the well-being of the natives, asserted French deputies.<sup>11</sup> A theory based on conquest pure and simple could therefore not be considered in France after the humanitarian reaction of 1905. But autonomy remained as unwanted as ever, and the Frenchman, however much he might criticize the theory of assimilation, was as essentially a product of the administrative machine as ever, bereft of individuality and originality. In view of this, the new theory—*any* colonial theory in France—had to have at least a substratum of assimilation. At the same time, the only possible development was in the direction of autonomy,—not necessarily autonomy in the British sense of responsible government, but perchance autonomy on native lines. Autonomy came to be synonymous with any development that was natural and spontaneous : it was an asymptotic curve, with actual autonomy in the limited parliamentary sense only a vision on the horizon. The new theory in all, therefore, had to be a blend of assimilation and autonomy, partaking of the nature of the first to some degree, yet tending towards some form of suitable self-government,—to a potential autonomy. It was between the two and yet distinct from either,—compatible with the French instinct of administration but at the same time capable of being adapted to a developing colony.

The new theory was called association or collaboration. As originated by Jules Harmand and Waldeck-Rousseau and Clementel, it emphasized the essential duality of the colonial task.<sup>12</sup> Both French and natives had to progress, if the achievement was not to be sterile. “The colonies are made only for the Metropolis,”<sup>13</sup> the slogan of the *Pacte Colonial* had run : but the new theory emphatically denied this. Colonization was no longer viewed as a unilateral operation. It is true that the motive of economic empiricism remained, and had to remain,—to this extent the old theory lingered. But that was no longer the only motive.

“Gradually a doctrine of colonization emerged which, while starting from a consideration of metropolitan power or profit, was yet instinctively impregnated with a spirit of altruism, and worked for the colonies themselves,—for their own advantage, for their economic strength, and their *human* development. It reconciled more and more those two elements without which no policy can be popular in a democracy like ours,—the heart and reason, duty and self-interest.”<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Waldeck-Rousseau, in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 15/6/01.

<sup>12</sup> J. Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, pp. 158–159.

<sup>13</sup> This phrase actually occurred in *L'Encyclopédie*, article “Colonie,” by de Forbonnais.

<sup>14</sup> A. Sarraut, *La Mise en Valeur des Colonies Françaises* (1923), p. 87.

Thus Sarraut; and, beyond the mere sentimental persiflage, there was a distinctly new stress,—an emphasis that did not exist in the writings of the nineties, even in those of the colonial well-wishers. Ferry and Burdeau, for instance, did not touch this point. It was essentially a part of the France reawakened by the colonial scandals of the Congo and Cochin-China, and seized once more by its rôle as the apostle of liberalism in the world. It may have been theatrical, it was probably an inverted form of national egoism, but, none the less, it was very real as a force influencing colonial policy.

The colonies had become humanized, so to speak. They were looked on as living entities in themselves, compelled to consider the interests of the motherland, of course, but still developing apart from, and even differently to, that motherland. They had become societies instead of markets, and as societies had to develop. To use the phrase which Sir Frederick Lugard coined to describe a somewhat similar change in English colonization, the French had perceived that colonization involved a dual mandate. Or, as Sarraut, the arch-apostle of the new doctrine, explained it, the *mise en valeur* was a double one. “A *mise en valeur* of natural riches and a *mise en valeur* of the human riches! French colonial policy sees in our *protégés*, whatever the colour of their skin and however retarded their evolution, *men* and not an anonymous and servile mass,—*souls* and neither slave-prisoners nor ‘fiscal sponges.’”<sup>15</sup> Any development, therefore, had to secure the well-being of both sides.

That was the assumption at the back of the new theory. But where the association theory became so useful was in its definition of the means by which this dual end could be achieved. Assimilation also had wanted the well-being of the natives, but it had turned to an impractical means of realizing it. The associationists did not make this blunder. They saw from the outset that any development, to benefit the natives and the colony, had to do so from the native and colonial view-point. It was in the recognition of a distinct view-point in these regards that the new theory was so conspicuous an advance. It meant two points of view,—colonial and metropolitan; and this was entirely new in French colonization. For the natives, it meant a development from their own past and compatible with that past: and, for the colony in general, it meant a strengthening as an entity in itself. Both natives and the colony were to evolve in the light of their own actual position,—from their own individual past to their own individual future.

This implied that the standards of assimilation had lost their validity. Assimilation had denied the necessity of colonial individuality, and could not conceive of any justification for development away from a norm,—

<sup>15</sup> A. Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, p. 88.

the norm of Paris. Deviation from this standard had been a recognition of failure: under the new theory, it might become something even desirable, a testimony to colonial virility. This applied particularly to the native sphere, and, in lesser degrees, to the legal and administrative worlds. Local influences were admitted in each of these cases and, despite the natural French tendencies to the contrary, could even dominate the situation. Contrast, for instance, the Civil Codes of Algeria and Cochinchina, exclusively French, with those of West Africa or Tonkin. The land-laws and the native courts were in the one case French, but in the other in accordance with native conditions. They were poles apart.

To be logical, this recognition of local growth should have extended to the economic sphere, but there considerations of State entered. France was content to allow the colonies to strengthen themselves economically, but the needs of the French State made it necessary to subordinate colonial development to that of France. Industrial development and tariff-laws, therefore, had to remain essentially central matters and had to be determined by the needs of the metropolis. This, though avowedly a breach in the doctrine of association, was due to a recognition of the fact that France had national, as well as colonial, problems.

On the governmental side, however, the position was easier, and there were no impassable obstacles between theory and practice. The natives were to become increasingly self-governing, but from their own point of view. Naturalization was still to be the exception rather than the rule, just as, in the judicial sphere, French civil laws were the exception. On the other hand, the natives were to develop their own laws and customs and assemblies. Self-government was to be in essentially native assemblies, like the Councils of Native Notables erected in West Africa in 1923<sup>16</sup> or like Paul Bert's elected Council in Tunisia forty years ago.<sup>17</sup> In the higher assemblies, where European interests entered as well, the native model could not be so easily followed, but still, they were to be sufficiently represented there, even if they did not control such assemblies. Association meant joint action: that could best be secured by having assemblies on the Algerian model, with separate panels or groups for Europeans and natives. These sections could meet independently and then deliberate frankly and without one section embarrassing the other. The natives could thus participate in government to the limit of their capacities. They could govern themselves in the villages and perhaps in the provinces, and take a share in the general government of the colony,—a share that would vary with their importance and stage of

<sup>16</sup> *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1923, p. 439, or Daresté, *Recueil Colonial*, 1920, p. 467, for commencement.

<sup>17</sup> J. Chailley-Bert, *Paul Bert au Tonkin* (1887), p. 129 *et seq.*



development. Sometimes, it would be a merely nominal representation, as in Cochin-China; at others, a real but lesser participation, as in Algeria; and still again, perhaps they could be real co-partners, as under the Tunisian Council scheme of 1922.<sup>18</sup> All depended on circumstances.

The final point of the theory of association emphasized a general decentralization. Hitherto, the most marked characteristic of French colonial efforts had been the excessive subordination to Parisian officialdom, even to the extent of throttling colonial virility. But hereafter, since mutual development was the order of the day, it was agreed (at least in theory) that the colonies had to have a freer hand. Their governors were to have "a mandate to do and dare": purely colonial matters were to come under their local assemblies: and they were to manage all things that would not prejudice other colonies or the general national interest.<sup>19</sup> The new theory spoke of the possible limits of development and allowed development with those limits, rather than ceded a few specific privileges and denied the remainder. On the administrative side, the theory of association thus meant a colonial charter allowing the progressive enfranchisement of the colonies. It was still recognized that development had to be slow and consolidated at every step, and it was felt that the change was only possible because Parliamentary control had been increasing over colonial matters since 1906, and therefore effective checks still remained with the central power. But it was certainly realized that development was permissible. The concession was not a matter of right and was not to come to colonies too quickly: yet it *could* come, and therein lay the change of emphasis. A scope was provided for the first time: whether it was realized depended on the position of the colony and on the vagaries of French politics. Yet it was something to have even the scope for development,—even the understanding that demands for change would not at once be rejected. The possibility of development was there, and however difficult its realization might be, however much the lingering of assimilative ideas or the hold of the central bureaucracy might retard it, increased local powers were not now completely out of the question.

Thus, in all, the theory of association came to mean three things. The colonies were to be strengthened and their well-being considered up to the point at which considerations of national policy entered: secondly, the natives were to develop along their own lines and, even if the French officials remained as powerful as before, they were to maintain the peculiar native codes and embody them in the new legislation: and thirdly, decentralization and a growing degree of self-government

<sup>18</sup> *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1922, p. 247 *et seq.*

<sup>19</sup> Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, pp. 105-108.

were possible, but not inevitable, contingencies. They might come, but probably would not for a long time, outside the world of theory. This position represents the post-war colonial theory of France, but it must always be remembered that there are at least two qualifying factors. Whatever theory says, the centralized rule of the Parisian officials remains the dominant feature in colonial life, even if Parliament, as at the time of Sarraut's projects of 1921-1922, adopts more liberal views.<sup>20</sup> Naturally, the *bureaux* still tend to favour the old methods of assimilation, and such is the nature of French training that the average administrators in the field do likewise. The second consideration is that any such theory of colonial enfranchisement is always qualified by the national problem of France. The central organization declares a state of national emergency, especially in recent years in the economic world ; and every phase of national life, colonial or otherwise, has to be consciously subordinated to the realization of the desired ends. The colonial problem thus becomes a part of the wider national policy, and, however much the theory of association or any other theory of colonial relationships may be accepted or desired, it has to be postponed if the wider national interests demand its repression.<sup>21</sup>

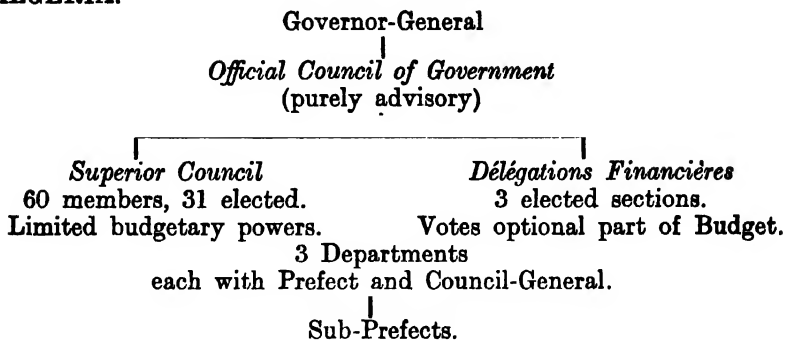
With these fundamental limitations, the theory of association is the accepted theory of colonial policy in France. But the limitations, rather than the popularity of the theory, determine how far it will be enforced in practice, and whether it will mean a real colonial co-operation and enfranchisement, or whether it will lead, as it has done in practice, only to a continuation of the old policy with a more extensive consideration of native ends and a deference to the native point of view.

<sup>20</sup> Hanotaux in *Journal Officiel*, *Deps.*, 27/11/90 ; J. L. de Lanessan, *La Colonisation Française en Indo-Chine* (1895), p. 346 ; Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, pp. 236-240 ; *L'Afrique Française*, 1919, p. 179.

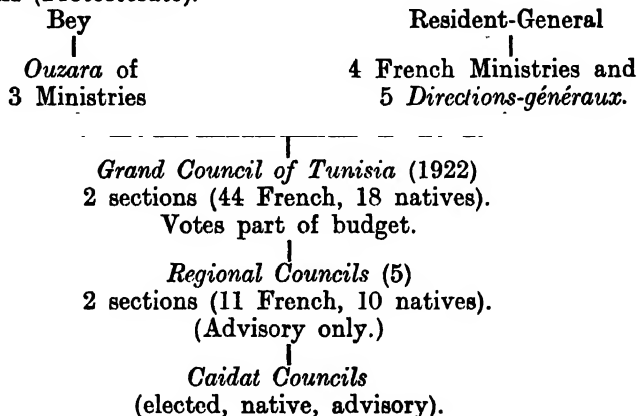
<sup>21</sup> Dubois et Terrier (1902), *op. cit.*, p. 396 ; Sarraut (1923), p. 110.

## POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE FRENCH COLONIES

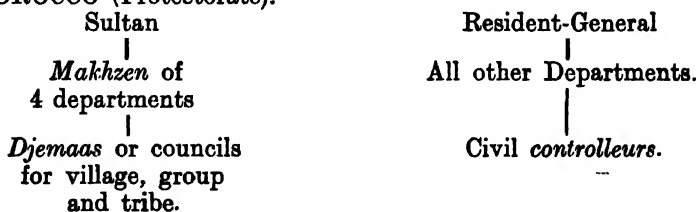
### I. ALGERIA.



### II. TUNISIA (Protectorate).



### III. MOROCCO (Protectorate).



NO OTHER COUNCILS.

### IV. INDO-CHINA (Federation of one colony and four protectorates).

#### I. FEDERAL ORGANIZATION.

Governor-General and all services.

|  
*Government-Council (1911)*  
 Composed of officials, delegates of  
 commercial bodies and 5 nominated natives.  
 Advisory functions on financial matters.

## II. LOCAL ORGANIZATION.

Colony of COCHIN-CHINA	Protectorates of			Laos
	<i>Tonkin</i>	<i>Annam</i>	<i>Cambodia</i>	
Governor	Residents-superiors			Resident-Superior
	<i>Official Councils</i>			
<i>Official Council</i>	(advisory)			
(advisory)				
	<i>Advisory Native Councils</i>			Advisory
				Native
	<i>Provincial or Residency</i>			Committee
	<i>Councils (natives).</i>			(1920).

## V. WEST AFRICA.—Federation of 7 Colonies and 1 Territory.

## EQUATORIAL AFRICA.—Federation of 4 Colonies.

In each,—a Federal Government-General and an official Government Council, purely advisory.

—a Lieutenant-Governor and an advisory official council in each colony of the union.

West Africa has had advisory local councils of Native Notables since 1919. Beyond that, West Africa is divided into 98, and Equatorial Africa into 44 *cercles*, each with a French administrator.

## VI. MADAGASCAR (a Government-General, but no division into colonies).

Governor-General

|

*Advisory Administrative Council*

(Officials, and 4 nominated Europeans and 2 natives)

|

*Délégations Economiques et Financières* (1924)

(2 sections, partly elected, partly nominated)

—purely advisory.

## VII. THE SCATTERED COLONIES.

Each with a Governor and Council.

*Councils-General* in Antilles, Réunion, Guiana, French India, New Caledonia, Tahiti,

—elected by French citizens.

*Colonial-Councils* in Senegal and Cochin-China, elected by French citizens, and with native elements added.

Functions of all are in voting the non-obligatory sections of the budget and advising on general economic matters.

## II. The Actual Political Organization of the French Colonies

### COLONIAL REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT

In the first stages of French colonization, it was considered sufficient to have an official council in the colony itself and a small representation of the colony in the Paris Parliament. The election of senators and deputies by the French citizens in the colonies has always been one of the distinctive attributes of French effort overseas. More, it is one of the curiosities of European colonization,—something unique in colonial annals.<sup>22</sup> It certainly has been, and remains, one of the most vexed questions in French colonial history : and, for all of these reasons, is of more than passing interest.

The history of such colonial representation has been most peculiar. It has been given and arranged under very differing sets of circumstances. It started as far back as the Revolutionary administrations. A law of August, 1792, allowed the colonies, feeble as they then were, to send thirty-four representatives to the Convention, and they were represented in the various national bodies until the Constitution of the Year VIII. That Constitution, however, abolished the colonial deputies and replaced them by an advisory council of six members, nominated by the Chambers of Agriculture in the colonies. Colonial interests were given expression on this feeble basis until the Revolution of 1848, when, in the first flush of that overweening liberalism which at once freed the slaves and instituted the wholesale naturalization of various African and Indian bodies, colonial representatives were again admitted to the national assemblies.<sup>23</sup> The Second Empire once more abolished them and reverted to the idea of a council ; and it was not until a decree of September, 1870, that representation was permanently re-established.<sup>24</sup> Since then, the principle has been reaffirmed on several occasions, even as late as 1924, and it can with accuracy be termed a cardinal feature of French colonial policy.

Actually, the position is not uniform. Some colonies have no representation at all : others, like Guiana and Senegal and Cochin-China, are represented only in the Deputies : and certain favoured groups, like Algeria, the *Anciennes Colonies*, and the five Indian towns have representatives in both the Senate and Deputies. Nor is there any uniform method of election. Election to the Senate is usually in the hands of an electoral college, composed of the different kinds of local councillors, and that to the Deputies by the suffrage of all French citizens ; but practice varies in the different groups.

<sup>22</sup> Portugal has copied France in this regard, Italy has a similar agitation.

<sup>23</sup> For history, see P. Dislère, *Traité de Législation Coloniale* (1906, 3rd edition), Vol. I, p. 361 *et seq.*

<sup>24</sup> E. Petit, *Organisation des Colonies Françaises* (1894), Vol. I, p. 254.

The whole position and policy have been hotly contested on several occasions, especially before 1914, when such a procedure was possible without hurting the new-found *amour-propre* of the colonies. The principle itself is opposed on many grounds. Its adherents assert that it is in accord with the spirit of democracy; that a Frenchman abroad should have the same rights as a Frenchman at home; that the concession of representation has a definite value in securing colonial loyalty; that the growing economic importance of the colonies renders their representation the more necessary; and that it is only by representation in Parliament itself that their views can be at all expressed.<sup>25</sup> But, of these supposed justifications, the first two assume that representation is the *only* way of realizing a colonial's rights, the third seems unfounded in fact, the fourth has no point, and the last is, to say the least, questionable. The arguments for Parliamentary representation of the colonies are weak in logic and not supported by the practical position. It is argued that the colonies should be represented when measures involving their interests are being discussed, but the colonies have their Ministerial representatives, and, even if this were not the case, is it fair that colonial representatives should gravely interfere with purely French matters? What is fair to a handful of colonists becomes unfair to the millions of Frenchmen at home, and a democracy should consider the interests of the majority. A deputy of Cochinchina, who was under the conditions the spokesman of a few colonial officials, once caused the fall of a Cabinet on the question of the central mayoralty of Paris! A few years ago, the colonies had thirty-three representatives,—a number that was clearly disproportionate in the voting on the great majority of French Parliamentary measures. They vote on legislation and budgets not applicable to their colonies, and it was never argued in practice, as the Americans did in the case of the Hawaiian Senator, that the colonial representatives were present in any limited capacity. They were admittedly there for their own local interests, yet could interfere in all matters, although it was never maintained that they should have the same mandate for general affairs of the nation, in the same way that a Midi deputy has. The arguments that justify their presence in Parliament view them as local spokesmen, but there is neither rule nor convention that they limit themselves to this function. Moreover, even if they limited themselves to questions involving their own interests, there is, it is claimed, no need for a special Parliamentary representation, because they have the three Ministries directly

<sup>25</sup> See arguments in A. Mériqnac, *Précis de Législation et d'économie Coloniales* (1912), p. 371, or *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National, 1889-1890*, Vol. I, p. 44 *et seq.* The bitterest opposition is in L. Vignon, *Un Programme de Politique Coloniale* (1919), p. 513.

concerned to look after their interests. And lastly, since the colonies are mainly under the *régime* of decrees, the voting of laws is beyond their interests, properly construed: the vast majority of colonial matters are regulated by simple decrees, which cannot be influenced by the colonial representatives in Parliament.

Representation was anomalous at first and has become increasingly so since. If the principle of 1870 was right, and if all the colonies were to receive the privileges vouchsafed to the undeveloped settlements of that date, colonial expansion would now demand, on a population basis, 600 deputies and 300 senators, and this takes no account of the claims for increased representation on the ground of colonial evolution in the meantime! If there are less, the colonists of the seventies were over-represented: if there are this number, the position is *ipso facto* absurd.

So much for the principle: the details are equally unjustifiable. Representation is haphazard, the franchise chaotic. The Senegalese and Hindus have the vote and representation, simply because they were organized at a certain date! Yet the Arabs and Annamites, though far more progressive, remain unrepresented! Representation has been determined by a series of legislative accidents, and is perpetuated by annual comedies. The electoral farces in the colonies have become a by-word in France. Even the official textbooks for the law-courses at the Sorbonne gravely accept and speak of this fact.<sup>26</sup> The farce reaches its height in Senegal and the French towns of India.<sup>27</sup> In the former, the negroes are said to march in lines to vote as directed; in India, the votes are recorded beforehand *en masse* by the Hindu leaders. In Martinique and Guadeloupe, intimidation and corruption have become almost synonyms for the electoral process, and, especially in the stormy period of 1900-1901, when the blacks were protesting against the hegemony of the mulattoes in the only means they understood, riots and incendiarism often accompanied the elections. In all of these colonies alike, barely one-fifth of the privileged persons take the trouble to vote at all!<sup>28</sup>

But it is the distribution, rather than the exercise, of the franchise that remains the great weakness in practice. In India there are 50,000 native voters as compared with some 500 Frenchmen: in Cochin-China there were 2,000 electors for a population of three millions, and more than three-quarters of these were officials. The Annamites, unless naturalized,

<sup>26</sup> For example, in R. Foignet, *Manuel Élémentaire de Législation Coloniale* (1925), p. 117, or Girault, 2nd Part, Vol. I, p. 685.—“It would be puerile to deny them.”

<sup>27</sup> See attacks of Estournelles de Constant in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 10, 12/7/98.

<sup>28</sup> See the crushing figures in Girault, 2nd Part, Vol. I (1922), p. 617 note.

have no vote, yet are constrained to see the despised Indian immigrants, holders of the lowest occupations, using the electoral urns! In the sugar-islands, the Indian precedent has been adopted, and the franchise extended to all, regardless of personal qualifications. These islands, proverbially torn by racial and class hatreds and noted above everything for their atrophied communal sense, have been deluged with voting-tickets.<sup>29</sup> In the Senegal, the position is the most confused of all. There, any native who happens to be born in five communes scattered over the land is given the franchise, while all the unfortunates who have not had their baby forms drugged with the sense of civic responsibility that presumably emanates from the soil of these lucky districts languish for ever in the vote-less caste. Not unnaturally, the migration of expectant mothers is by no means an unusual sight in the Senegal. Even the enfranchised *tirailleurs* of Algeria have had to earn their vote by military service; a little pre-natal care secures it in the Senegal. The whole procedure of election in every colony has thus been termed a caricature of the suffrage,—a slight to the republican *régime* instead of, as its upholders claim, one of its most obvious manifestations.

For all of these reasons, but especially because the colonial representatives interfered with purely metropolitan matters and because the elections were so farcical, the opposition to such representation was very intense before 1914. Parliament, it is true, was slow to tackle the matter, because the wider question of naturalization, already a sore point with the Moslem subjects of France, was involved: but it was clearly understood that no extension of colonial representation would be sanctioned under any circumstances, and that, if the question could have been considered *de novo*, measures like those of 1870 and 1875 would not have been approved. The whole position is archaic and meaningless, and one of the gravest obstacles in the way of settling many of France's colonial problems. The Mohammedan problem in particular is accentuated by the existence of colonial representation, or rather, by the exclusion of the Moslems from its privileges. Moreover, it is difficult to see how the questions of naturalization, the *état civil* of the Moslems, and colonial councils can be settled with this obstacle athwart the path. The trouble is not only that the question of representation is important in itself: it directly prohibits a settlement of many wider and more important issues. From being an anomaly in itself, it becomes a positive menace to France's general colonial policy.

Yet little can be done to change the position. Such representation was universally accepted in the eighties, when assimilation was the accepted theory, and a proposition to abolish it in 1897 was rejected

<sup>29</sup> Regismanset, *Questions Coloniales*: 1900-1912, p. 104 *et seq.*



without being considered.<sup>30</sup> But hostile opinion grew in the first years of the new century, and it was becoming clearer that colonial representation could no longer be explained away as a great colonial tradition. It was neither practical nor reasonable, according to the average opinion, and should be abolished because of its implications on French Mohammedan policy, and its unfairness both to the unrepresented colonies and to the French voters at home. These logical arguments, however, were given a different value by the events of the war-years, and it became impolitic, to say the least, to limit colonial rights needlessly at this time. The colonies demanded some compensation for their sacrifices in the war and were becoming increasingly restive at their lack of political privileges and the economic penalties which they had to endure. To attack their representation, which was, after all, only a more or less spectacular oddity, would have been to provoke discontent or worse. The problem had become obscured by war-psychology, and thus remains as before, save that the effect it exercises on France's wider colonial problems is becoming more and more baneful with the passage of the years.

If it is to remain, as a symbol of empire-equality, and as a vehicle of colonial self-expression, then there are no arguments as to why it should not be improved. Clearly, the fact that it has been abused in the past is no reliable guide for the future, nor is this a criticism of the system so much as a detail of its operation. Moreover, the criticism that it unduly favours certain colonies to the neglect of others, especially of the Mohammedans, can be answered by making colonial representation more uniform. There seem no serious objections to spreading the representatives over all the colonies, thus giving representation to all in proportion to their present importance: and, if this is done, the scandals of election can be overcome by limiting the franchise to those who have shown that they can exercise it. There is no reason at all why deputies should be elected by universal suffrage in certain colonies. Why cannot a restricted franchise be introduced in all? This would mean, of course, that the negroes in the Antilles and the Senegalese communes and the Indians of the French towns would be deprived of some of their rights, but after all, they number only 400,000 out of France's 56 million native subjects, and the general gain would compensate for the individual loss. That is, if the system of parliamentary representation has to remain (though, as has been seen, this in itself seems uncalled for), it can at least be made uniform and logical. It will always remain an anomaly and a concession to sentiment (because, in the new colonial

<sup>30</sup> Michelin Report in *Journal Officiel*, docts. parl., 1897, p. 8 *et seq.*, or *Deps.*, 17/1/97.

days of Governments-General, the other argument that it provides an expression for colonial interests loses its force); but it will no longer be a hindrance to France's general policy. The system, one way or the other, will occasion trouble, but the discontent caused either by its complete abolition or by its reform and extension would be far less than the insidious and growing menace it is at present to French Mohammedan policy,—and, in the last resort, this latter is the most important issue in French colonization. But, however this may be, the country is at present content to let the matter drift,—presumably on the principle that troublesome points should not be considered until they cause an actual crisis.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF COLONIAL COUNCILS

Outside of representation in the central Parliament, France did little in the way of giving privileges to her colonies in the last century. The colonist in general was given a representation in Paris, because that was a spectacular gesture and a proof that a Frenchman going overseas had not forfeited any of his political rights. But the more urgent question of giving him effective representation *within* his colony was considered very little. The colony was an official preserve, ruled by automata who carried out policies determined in Paris. That was the theory of the day, and naturally left no scope for colonial councils, except as an ornamental addition to the colonial structure.

The exceptions to this theory were when Revolutionary Governments in France attempted to extend the burning fire of their liberalism to little bonfires in the colonies. Thus, the Constituent Assembly gave the colonies elected councils, with a power of coming to decisions on purely local matters (1790–1791). But they abused their powers, and colonial assemblies disappeared until the Bourbon Restoration.<sup>31</sup> In 1825 and 1827, however, for some obscure reason, the government of Charles X set up General Councils in the old colonies,—nominated bodies to advise on economic questions. This was a very meagre start, but the Government of July went further and substituted more powerful bodies for them in April, 1833. The “Colonial Councils,” as the new bodies were called, were quite different from the General Councils they replaced. The earlier ones had been purely departmental assemblies, exactly duplicating those of France; but the new ones, as the very designation “Colonial” implied, were specially designed for the overseas possessions. They were elected by a college composed of financial representatives, and, as the Monarchy of July believed in administrative decentralization, had extended powers. They voted the budget, fixed certain taxes, and, in

<sup>31</sup> L. Deschamps, *Les Colonies pendant la Revolution* (1898), p. 174 et seq.

general, decided all local matters that did not come within the provenance of Parliamentary laws or Royal Ordinances. They really had rights of local self-government, although the checks of the executive officials made the system stop a long way short of the English system of responsible government.<sup>32</sup>

These Councils in turn abused their powers, because they imposed customs and passed decrees conflicting with the policy of the motherland, and, by a curious irony, were abolished *in toto* by that very Revolutionary Government of 1848 that was laying up trouble for the future in most other directions by the excessive liberalism of its colonial reforms. But the colonists, having enjoyed these powers for fifteen years, could not be deprived of every vestige of their privileges at one stroke, and it was obvious that there had to be some form of council. Experience had shown, however, that it was dangerous to give the self-seeking planters of the Old Colonies as much power as the Colonial Councils had given them since 1833, so that, when the Antilles and Réunion were again given councils in 1854, they were only allowed the limited variety such as had existed between 1825 and 1833. These were advisory "General Councils," not powerful "Colonial Councils." They had practically no powers at first, for France was determined to give the colonists their political education gradually, and not to invite disaster, as on two previous occasions, by a premature delegation of power. The Councils remained, therefore, on the old departmental model of the French mainland.

The *sénatus-consulte* of May 3, 1854, remains the fundamental legislation on this matter.<sup>33</sup> As in so many other fields, the Republicans simply maintained and extended the organization already in force. Up to 1892, such General Councils were extended to colonies that did not have them,—for instance, to Guiana (1878), Senegal (1879), and the Pacific colonies (1885). At the same time, their powers were increased. But, even so, they were only restored to the position of 1825,—that is, each extension of power did no more than approximate them more closely to the *Conseils-généraux* of France itself. They are elected by universal suffrage, but are not very powerful. The governor can prorogue or dissolve them at will: on most matters, they can only advise: and practically the only field in which they can come to decisions is in regard to property-matters, and, even there, the Council of State can annul their decisions. In practice, they virtually decide certain of the budget expenses, but all of this rests with the discretion of both the local and the

<sup>32</sup> Documents are in Dislère (1906), Vol. II, chap. 7. Cp. Vol. I, p. 371, or Girault (1922), 2.1.653 *et seq.* A documented account is in G. Francois' *Le Budget Local des Colonies* (1908), p. 20 *et seq.*

<sup>33</sup> Dislère (1906), *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 84, 218; *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National*, 1889-1890, Vol. II, p. 9 *et seq.*

central executive officials. They remain elected advisory bodies of no considerable importance. They merely duplicate a detail of French local government in the colonies and were quite inadequate when the colonies came to have interests of their own. After 1892, therefore, they gradually declined, and official policy turned to other more extensive methods of representation. At present, there are only six General Councils in the French Empire, and all are insignificant.

Two other colonies had practically similar bodies, although local exigencies demanded a somewhat different organization. The first of these was in Cochin-China, which had been annexed and assimilated to France. As an assimilated colony it had to have some local legislature, and yet the great bulk of the population consisted of natives. These were too important to be overlooked, yet had to stand outside the suffrage, otherwise the disastrous experiment of the Senegalese communes or the Antilles would find itself duplicated. As instituted in 1880, therefore, its Colonial Council was an elected body, with representation accorded to both the natives and to Europeans, though by different systems for each. Of a total membership of eighteen, six were elected by French citizens, six were natives chosen by a college consisting of delegates from the municipalities, four represented commercial bodies, and the last two were nominated by the Government.<sup>34</sup> The only other such Council, that of Senegal, arose from equally peculiar circumstances. The natives of five communes there had been enfranchised *en bloc* in 1848, and they alone had elected representatives to the earlier General Council which Senegal had in common with the other colonies. But this meant that their fellows outside the privileged communes, that is, the great majority of the population, had no rights at all: hence a decree of December, 1920, replaced the existing General Council by a Colonial Council on the Cochin-Chinese model.<sup>35</sup> As before, the French citizens, mostly the natives of the five communes, elected twenty members, but now, in addition, the local chiefs in *palaver* elected twenty of their own number to represent the outside native population. Both of these Colonial Councils, however, are simply Councils-General in everything but name, and are organized in this way mainly because of the peculiar demographical conditions in the colonies concerned.

As the colonies developed, however, the legislative problems changed. They became societies, almost States in themselves, and local interests began to emerge. This was especially the case in Algeria and after the institution of the federal governments in the other groups of colonies. Such a step necessarily entailed a large degree of decentralization, and

<sup>34</sup> E. Petit, *op. cit.*, Vol. I (1894), pp. 249, 280.

<sup>35</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 9/12/20.

this in turn meant the emergence of a distinctly local point of view. To express this, some wider kind of Council became necessary. The representative body had to be something more than a cog in the machinery of local administration,—and that was all that the Councils-General and the newer Colonial Councils amounted to. The need was for a miniature Parliament, however restricted its functions might be at first, and it was idle to grope round amongst the institutions of French local government to find a model that might be transplanted to the colonies, as the Colonial Council had been. Something like the quite different Colonial Councils of 1833–1848 was needed,—some embryonic legislative body for the colony as a whole.

The starting-point in this connection was naturally Algeria, because there the French population was far larger than in any other colony, and moreover, the land had always been the general experimental-station of French policy. The departments of Algeria had had local Councils-General on the ordinary administrative model since 1875. Consisting of elected French and native members, these had exactly the same attributes as in France itself and the other colonies, and offered no peculiar features. They simply aided the prefect at the head of each department, that was all. It was not until 1898 that Algeria took the next step and offered anything to colonial theory in this connection. Then, as a result of the discontent and riots of the early nineties and because of the protests against the system of *rattachements* or administrative union to France, a body known as the *Délégations Financières* had been created.<sup>36</sup> This step defined the direction of political development throughout the French colonies and explained the official attitude to the general questions of colonial growth. The *Délégations* was simply an economic Council, consisting of three sections. Of these, the first had twenty-four members to represent the French settlers, the second an equal number representing French citizens other than settlers on the land, and the third was the native section, with nine members elected by the natives of the civil territories, six elected by the Kabylie chiefs, and the remaining six nominated in the military territories of the southern interior. Each section deliberated separately and existed specifically to represent certain interests. The whole scheme is an interesting experiment in arriving at common interests through the medium of particular. It is one especially favourable to a country in which several peoples live side by side and where a joint body would mean the submergence of all save the most powerful section: and the point was that these were the conditions that pertained in most of the French colonies.

<sup>36</sup> The decree is in full in Girault (1921), Part 3, p. 108. A good article is in *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, July, 1900, Sept., 1903.

The functions of the Algerian body are equally interesting. It meets almost exclusively to discuss the local budget, on all of which it advises and over certain parts of which it has control. Each delegation nominates members to a special joint commission which examines the budget as drawn up by the Government-General. They report to the general body, where the budget is discussed and voted. But well-defined limitations are imposed on their power, and such voting of the budget is by no means what it is in a British colony enjoying the rights of responsible government. Certain expenses, the so-called obligatory charges, are entirely outside their scope, so that the ordinary work of administration would go on however recalcitrant the *Délégations* became. But, in practice, their power has gradually increased until, by 1920, four-fifths of the total budget had come under their control. Certain other matters, too, especially the customs, are taken from them, and there are various executive checks both inside and outside the colony. Nevertheless, they are to a large degree the arbiters of Algerian finances,<sup>37</sup> and, outside of their budgetary functions, they can, if called upon, give advice upon "all other financial and economic questions." As a result, the charter of 1898, especially as enlarged by the cession of budgetary autonomy in 1900,<sup>38</sup> came to mean two things,—that the representative body practically controlled the colony's budget (though liable to external checks if wider national considerations intervened), and, secondly, that they became the economic spokesmen of the country, and, as the events of the post-war crisis showed, a by no means powerless check on the Government-General.

This type of financial Council became the recognized form for the French colonies. The normal organization for a developed colony came to be an economic council, with separate panels for the various sections of the population, both native and French. All political affairs were to be kept in the hands of the officials and in no wise to be even discussed by the elected body. Its chief, indeed its only positive, function was to discuss and pass the budget: and even this was but one step in the evolution of the budget and by no means entailed that it was final in the form so approved. Beyond that, the local Council was only to advise and, in particular, protest, thus enabling the executive officials to frame a policy in accordance with the wishes of the people. After 1900, the colonies in general could thus have Councils which could influence, even if they could not say the final word on, the local budgets, and which could

<sup>37</sup> For details of position, see Chap. XVI, III, *infra*, or Girault, Part I, pp. 176-178. At present, the local bodies have a virtual but not legal control over 80 per cent. of the budget.

<sup>38</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 15/12/99, 23/5/1900, or report in *Journal Officiel*, docts. parl., sess. ord., 1900, p. 1708. For details, see Chap. VI below.

impede, while they could not absolutely hold up, the work of administration.

The Algerian scheme, though not extended to any other colony, remains the model of development, to be granted piecemeal as any other colony reaches a sufficient stage of development. Most colonies, like West Africa, retain only an official Council, and some, like Indo-China, have an official Council with native members in addition; but none have the elaborate Algerian organization. The protectorate of Tunisia, however, goes one stage further, even than Algeria, in expressing French policy in this regard. As a result of the protracted agitations after 1912, reforms of 1922 instituted a series of Councils which represent the furthest stage to which French colonial policy is willing to go at present.<sup>39</sup> The Tunisian system adheres to the customary form of economic councils representing interests instead of individuals: but it differs from the Algerian in extending to other than the national field and in giving absolute predominance to native representatives in certain of the smaller sections. The local Councils, those in each Caidat, are, it is true, solely advisory, but they have ten native members to eleven French, so that the native interests are too important to be overlooked. In the national body, the Grand Council of Tunisia, their position is quite as important. This Council is a sectional one like the *Délégations Financières* of Algeria, with one section for the natives and another for Europeans. Each section can introduce changes into the Budget, and no change can be brought in over the heads of the other section, except for reasons of State. If this is a limitation, it is also a safeguard for the native section. All political and constitutional matters are specifically placed outside the Council's scope, although in the economic field, a considerable, though not complete, power of self-government is conceded. A purely advisory body of somewhat similar sections has been introduced to Madagascar in September, 1921,<sup>40</sup> and the Ministry of Colonies has declared that, as soon as the native or European populations in any colony shall have reached a sufficient degree of development, this will be the model gradually realized.

As will be evident, however, the scope of development actually attained in this direction in the French colonial world has been very little. There are two provinces, Algeria and Tunisia, in which the joint economic assemblies have definite rights in connection with the budget: in eight others, the Council advises and has a little positive influence in the same direction: but beyond this, save for an advisory

<sup>39</sup> *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1922, p. 247.

<sup>40</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, 1922, p. 44. Extended and made representative in May, 1924 (Foignet, 1925, *op. cit.*, p. 205); *Journal Officiel*, 12/5/24.

body in Madagascar and a partly representative Council in Indo-China, the colonies have no legislative bodies. Representation in the central Parliament is supposed to meet the demands of the French citizens in the colonies, and the provision for economic articulation is deemed sufficient for the natives. Beyond that the French do not go.

The position is remarkable in many ways. Algeria has 700,000 French settlers, yet has only two Councils with a right of influencing the budget but forbidden to discuss political matters. Tunisia has its elaborate, but as yet embryonic, scheme of councils, also limited to budgetary discussion. Indo-China and West Africa, despite their growing importance, have no effective Federal Councils, Madagascar has its new advisory body, the older colonies have their ornamental departmental Councils, and Equatorial Africa has nothing! Nowhere is there any political body, nowhere any responsible government.

#### REASONS FOR POLITICAL BACKWARDNESS

It is abundantly clear why this inadequate situation has persisted. In the main, it was produced by two sets of forces. Colonization in the first place emphasized the economic standpoint. That is why theory is so developed on the economic side. Ferry's theory of markets, the 1892 theory of colonial subordination, and the twentieth-century argument for raw materials from the colonies were all clearly etched and admitted of no dispute. But here entered the second set of forces. Part of each economic theory in turn consisted of the assumption that the colonies should be subordinated to France. To this was added the rule of the *bureaux* and the instinct for centralization, because centralization and subordination largely meant the same thing. This meant rule by officials and a corresponding refusal to consider colonial development,—an attitude that was strengthened by the fact that the French colonies were, with the exception of Northern Algeria, situated in the tropics and thus closed to extensive European settlement. The colonies remained native strongholds and, even up to the present, dominated by the permanent executive officials. The attitude of the metropolis and the position of the colonies thus combined to make any development economic. That is why the first colonial assemblies had economic functions alone and why they have always been forbidden to consider political matters. That is why, too, complete control of economic matters has always been kept from the local assemblies. Even in Algeria, and still more in the other colonies, the executive in the colony and in France, as well as the French Parliament, all exert restraining influences.

The only advance was in the recognition of a large degree of budgetary autonomy by the law of 1900, and in the idea of a growing participation



of native interests,—both of which policies are still confined to a minority of the French colonies. The present policy is gradually to extend the Algerian model, as amplified in parts in Tunisia, to the more backward colonies. But nothing is countenanced beyond the idea of economic functions and the effective representation of the various sections of the community. In general, except in Algeria and recently in Indo-China, there is a ban on the idea of individual representation (other than for French citizens), and thus by implication on naturalization. And, clearer than anything else, is the frequently reiterated pronouncement that there is to be no political development, even for advisory purposes. There is to be no devolutionary policy in this connection, and neither representative nor responsible government in the British sense. Still less is there to be autonomy or dominion status, even in Algeria and Indo-China. The issue specifically arose in those colonies and was at once dealt with. The French administration, while announcing the possibility of more extensive economic councils, especially for the changing Indo-China, resolutely refused to consider any political enfranchisement. Matters of policy, even of local policy, pertained to the official world or to Parliament, and even reformers like Maurice Long or Albert Sarraut, conformed to this point of view. As Sarraut said, during his tenure of the Ministry of the Colonies: "If my native policy clearly admits the necessity of advisory local assemblies, composed of natives elected on a native suffrage, I say very clearly that it does not favour a more or less hidden abdication of our sovereignty."<sup>41</sup> A little more administrative and financial power is envisaged for the colonies, and the joint native-French Councils are to have more real power in aiding the administration: but they are only to aid, and it is the administration that is to remain supreme in all of the colonies. Without executive supremacy, the French Empire would have no organization. Any colonial assemblies are to be tolerated, therefore, only in so far as they make the work of administration more efficient, either in itself or in curbing the spirit of discontent amongst the people. But development in the sense of an independent responsible government is not within the comprehension of French politicians, and, it must be added, very little advocated by the colonies themselves.

All sections of colonial thinkers in France agree on this interpretation. All would place these inexorable limits on colonial evolution, some more stringently than others. Doumer, for instance, representing the advanced ideas of twenty years ago, held that French officials were to govern the natives for their own welfare, and that no representation was needed beyond a purely advisory council nominated by the Chambers of Com-

<sup>41</sup> Sarraut in *Journal Officiel*, Senate, 27/2/20. For Long's views, see *Colonies et Marine*, Feb. 1921, p. 106 *et seq.*

merce and Agriculture.<sup>43</sup> To Jules Harmand, who spoke for the reformers of the period immediately before 1914, all that was necessary was an advisory assembly, consisting chiefly of nominated members and representatives of specialist bodies, and forbidden even to discuss the budget!<sup>43</sup> Sarraut, for the post-war reformers, goes a little further, as has been seen, and wants councils of the Tunisian type. But he stops short of local self-government, even in economic matters, and emphasizes administrative decentralization as his fundamental contribution to the theory of colonial control. His colonial assemblies, partly elected and partly nominated, while having a slightly stronger control of the local executive, are simply the *Délégations* of Algeria: and, to minimize even this, he also advocated a more immediate control of both local executive and local legislature by the French Parliament. All that his theory really amounts to, then, is that he wants to extend the Algerian system to the other colonies when they are ready, and, in the meantime, lessen the grip of the local *bureaux*.<sup>44</sup> But none of these thinkers have ever advocated the abdication of executive control: that has always been, and remains, the basic feature of French colonial policy.

French thought on this matter thus stands apart from English. The normal English trend was towards, first representative, and then responsible government, by which was meant the self-government of each colony by its elected representatives and the responsibility of the executive to the local legislature. It also meant a disappearance of the executive officials of the mother-country,—something inconceivable in the French colonies. In no case, however, even with Algeria, which affords the closest parallel to the advanced British colonies, have the French got beyond the stage of representative government, nor have they even reached that in the sense of being able to discuss all matters, political as well as economic. The Legislative Councils of the Australian States in the thirties and forties of last century were far more powerful and had more extensive functions than the Algerian councils of to-day. A more legitimate comparison is with Britain's Crown Colonies. Even there, the position is different. In them, development is by a gradually increasing participation of the natives in the work of government, both on its economic and political sides. The councils of Nigeria or Fiji, where conditions practically duplicate those of the French colonies, prove that. They are not self-governing in any sense, yet they discuss matters of all kinds, even those involving general policy, and the Government considers, if it does not of necessity act upon, their views. Yet,

<sup>43</sup> P. Doumer, *L'Indo-Chine Française* (1905), p. 362.

<sup>43</sup> Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, p. 358.

<sup>44</sup> Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, pp. 104-107.

save in West Africa since 1924, the French have had no native councils of this kind! In India, which may be compared with France's North African possessions, the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms and the subsequent council-schemes exemplify this untrammelled nature of development still more clearly, and in all cases alike, the British changes are in the direction of self-government,—not necessarily self-government from a European view-point, but self-rule in some way or other. They are genuinely developmental and aim at an all-round political education, whereas the French conception does not go beyond the profferment of economic advance and a limited control of the annual budget.

The result is that the problem remains unsolved in the French Empire. The existing organization is inadequate even for Algeria, where it is found in its more developed form, and ridiculously anomalous for Indo-China. Even the Tunisian reforms of 1922, though somewhat more liberal and at least systematic, do not seem to take into account the needs of general development. Elsewhere, representative assemblies are practically non-existent, in so far as they influence policy or tend in the direction of self-government. The most progressive part of the existing organization, that in Algeria and Tunisia, leaves no scope for the future: nor is it obvious how it can do so, as long as the French conception is that colonial assemblies can develop only in the direction of partially controlling the budget,—and even that is a goal far distant on the horizon for most colonies. Pressing problems have already emerged in this connection. As Algerian history has demonstrated, it is difficult to keep economic matters distinct from political. Every tax or appropriation touches the whole life of the State, and to deny this is to accept a purely artificial view of government. If this is admitted, the theory that self-government is economic must be enwidened to admit political matters; while, if it is refused, then to make theory conform with reality, the vetoing powers of the governors or the Council of State must continually be in operation.

Then, again, there is the demand of native interests for self-expression. The education of the natives has gone on apace, and political discontent has increased *pari passu*. Such natives must be represented in some form or other, especially since the enfranchisement of certain sections of Algerians in 1919 created a precedent more modern than the case of 1848. The recognition that whole classes of natives in one colony could become citizens raises the whole issue. France used previously to explain away the existence of the privileged natives of the Senegalese communes as an historical accident, but this argument, poor at any time, can no longer hold since the law of 1919, despite its insistence on individual worthiness,

has created a practically similar position afresh.<sup>45</sup> Even the backward natives have a larger degree of self-government in the adjacent British colonies of West Africa; and the more advanced Arabs and Berbers of the north point to the concession of self-government in Italian Libya in 1919 and the status of Egypt, and contrast the inadequacy of the position as it has been in Algeria since 1898. Then in Indo-China, which is perhaps the most vociferous of all the colonies, the natives point to the *Volksraad* the Dutch have instituted in Java and look round to their own lack of a federal legislative body.<sup>46</sup> The rising force of native discontent and a comparison with conditions elsewhere are joining to make changes inevitable, and the question is, not whether they shall be ceded, but how they will come!

France thus has perhaps a more elaborate administrative theory than any other colonial Power, but a woefully incomplete, almost a ridiculous, political policy. For default of this she oscillates between that undue repression which is noticeable in most colonies and an equally uncalled-for liberalism, as, for instance, with the wholesale concession of Algerian naturalization in 1919. What is needed is a general theory providing for a moderate and uniform advance,—a theory based on native councils on the West African model for the purely native communities and for an extension of the idea of panel representation so that it would include all the functions allowed by the British theory of representative government.<sup>47</sup> Such a change would at once clarify and meet the situation; and there seems no reason, beyond the inordinate degree of central officialdom, why it could not be brought about. Certainly, the existing attitude, that political matters must be postponed until the economic crisis of France and the colonies is overcome, is unjustified. France has done little beyond relying on the Algerian device of 1898, as extended by the cession of budgetary autonomy in 1900; so that to-day she has neither a theory nor a practical rule to meet the problems in this connection, and is frankly drifting and depending more than anything else on a policy of inhibitions. She will have minor economic councils to aid the local executive, and counts herself liberal if there is a little representation accorded to the natives on those councils. But nothing more exists, and nothing more liberal has ever been contemplated. The emphasis on assimilation and association to the contrary, it is, therefore, a moot point still as to how far the theory of *domination* characterizes

<sup>45</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 8/11/15, Senate, 31/1/19.

<sup>46</sup> J.-A. Collet, *L'Evolution de l'Esprit indigène aux Indes Orientales Néerlandaises* (1921), p. 91.

<sup>47</sup> For furthestmost French move in this direction, see *Colonies et Marine*, 1922, p. 224, or March-April, 1921, p. 162. For demands, see *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 10/2/14.

French colonial policy. With a political theory that does not go beyond comparatively unimportant economic councils, there is certainly much to be said for this contention, especially in view of the placid content with which the French colonial writers regard this situation.

## CHAPTER IV

### GENERAL NATIVE POLICY

FRANCE has approached her native problems with a point of view obscured by a conflict between several distinct, and frequently antagonistic, tendencies. On the one hand, there was the "classical spirit" of the eighteenth century,—that curious blend of passion and logic, humanitarianism and egoism. The Frenchman tends to be a confirmed ideologist, arguing from *a priori* considerations to the neglect of facts, and even in their face. Time and again in colonial matters (the native code in Annam and New Caledonia, for instance, and the enfranchisement of the Senegalese and Indians), he has preferred to sacrifice an applicable but logically imperfect theory to one which, while logically unassailable, was of dubious practical utility. It is in this connection that the oft-quoted phrase, "the excessive logic of the French spirit," has a very real significance. The Frenchman is thus a logician, a philosopher, blindly following one trend of argument perchance to the neglect of others; but he is also a sentimentalist and an inveterate proselytizer,—the offspring of these united tendencies being assimilation in every branch of activity. He is not only a builder of theories and a believer in symmetry but also a worshipper of natural rights, and thus it has often happened (as with the enfranchisement of the slaves in 1848 or the Algerians in 1919) that even his *a priori* theories and every vestige of past policy have been swept aside by a *furor* of unreasoning humanitarian emotion. On the other hand, there is a brusque military point of view, perceiving its end only in the light of the intervening obstacles to be destroyed. When this phase is in the ascendant, the Frenchman views all things native as barbaric survivals, and as hindrances in the way of conquest, centralization and symmetry. French policy, especially in the native field, has been the history of the conflict between these various tendencies: idealism freed the slaves in 1848 and later set up the policy of assimilation in all its branches; and militarism was responsible for the painful nature of so much of French colonization and for such native policies as *cantonement* and *refoulement*, both of which may be described as segregation based on a continual withdrawal,—progressive annihilation, in fact.

The two conflicting ideas had existed side by side as long ago as Colbert's time. He had proposed on the one hand "completely to exterminate" the Iroquois, and, on the other, "to call the inhabitants of the country into community of life with the French" and to instruct them "in the maxims of our religion and even of our customs." That is, he wavered between extermination and assimilation, just as Napoleon III did in Algeria two centuries later. The presence of these conflicting traits explains, too, why subjection and spoliation were the lot of the Algerians and complete equality the destiny of certain Senegalese; and why the natives of the French towns in India had all the rights of Parisians, whereas the Congo natives became virtual serfs. Their respective fates were decided by that trend of French theory which was dominant for the time being.

But, in the main, and despite the enfranchisement of the slaves in 1848 and Napoleon III's playing with the idea of "an Arab Kingdom," the native policy of the early years of the Second French Empire was based on a neglect of native interests. An unduly prolonged military conquest commenced a driving-back or *refoulement* of the natives, and the needs of European settlers continued it. Many reasons combined to bring this about. The premature emancipation of the negroes in the sugar-colonies, without the slightest preparation, had failed, and, by failing, had discredited the idea of liberalism in native policy, for, in the fifties and sixties, the only conceivable liberalism was one of development along the lines of European democracy. Moreover, colonization at this juncture was in the hands of the military and was construed as an essentially military venture. Algeria had no civil government till 1871, and naturally soldiers of the Empire, Père Bugeaud excepted, knew nothing and cared less of the complexities of native, and especially of Moslem, organization. Added to this was an ignorance of Islam, even amongst the civil administrators, and a contempt of the natives, not as inferior beings it is true, but as backward individuals, "dust of humanity," who had evolved no civilization. And in Algeria a further complicating feature was that the continued resistance (France had not reached Kabylie in 1868) engendered a feeling of exasperation which found vent in an insensate, but natural, desire for extermination.<sup>1</sup>

All of these tendencies joined to account for the policy of *refoulement*, which amounted to a continual driving back of the natives and a destruction of their organization. Why the two should have been necessary is not clear, but the French did not stop at the idea of segregation, and insisted on destruction as well. The point of view was such

<sup>1</sup> L. Vignon, *La France dans l'Afrique du Nord* (1888), pp. 190, 243 *et seq.*, or *Un Programme de Politique Coloniale* (1919), p. 188 *et seq.*

that only the numerical impossibility of such an outcome prevented extermination. France insisted on a *tabula rasa*, and was indifferent as to how this came about, so long as the methods were economical. The bald statement of such a policy seems almost beyond credence at this date, and yet it was consistently pursued in Algeria until 1870 and beyond. Marshal Randon's policy of *cantonnement* from 1852 onwards amounted to this, and it continued even after Napoleon III in 1863 ordered the maintenance of the natives in their lands. *Refoulement*, with its consequences, was the only *motif* in Algerian settlement till 1871, and the dominant one long after that.

The entire Arab policy of France at this date was a compound of ignorance and exasperation, seeking expression in destruction. The French had an unenviable record of *razzias* in Algeria, and even more disruptive than the purely military advance were the changes brought about in Arab organization. From 1830 onwards there was a long list of reforms the effect of which was to bring anarchy into Arabo-Berber civilization, resting as this did on unquestionable religious and traditional bases. To question meant to destroy, and change meant dissolution. There was, for instance, the initial confiscation of religious foundations (*habous*), the abolition of native criminal-justice, the breaking-up of tribal organization, the expropriation of native lands, both for rebellion and by the abuse of inapplicable laws (especially by the law of 1873), the suppression of *cadis* or native judges, the compulsory and ill-timed individualization of land tenures, and so on.<sup>2</sup>

Islam was immobile, "turning its back to the future and its face to the past"; and, at that time, with the daring of ignorance, France sought to make Moslem organization conform to modernization or to smash it. Some features of this organization France did not know, others she frankly ignored, as, for instance, the fundamentally religious nature of land and civil matters in a Moslem country. The Algerian rulers knew that what would be a purely temporal reform in Europe might affect the bases of religious belief in a Moslem land, but, in face of this knowledge, persisted in reforms that involved results out of all proportion to their own intrinsic importance. The whole intricate question of the "personal statute" of the Mohammedan was a case in point: all questions of marriage and successions and land-tenure and ownership of goods turned on this matter, the regulation of which depended on confused passages of Koranic law. France, seeking uniformity and simplicity, endeavoured to make it solely a secular matter, as simply regulated as obtaining a birth certificate in a Paris *arrondissement*. Naturally, the upshot was confusion and injustice and burning religious

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter I, Section III, *infra*.



resentment. Such measures at once alienated the natives, and the trouble was that, once attempted, they were irremediable. Once religious sensibilities were offended, especially with a people like the Algerian Mohammedans who regulate even the ordinary affairs of everyday life by religious sanctions, France could not retrace her steps and, by annulling the attempted reform, restore the *status quo*. The matter was by no means as simple as that, for the resentment remained.

The basic difficulty lay in the absolute conflict between the codes of France and Islam. For instance, in recognizing in 1830 "the free exercise of the Mohammedan religion," the French construed these words literally; the Mohammedans, on the other hand, took them to mean a freedom from outside intervention in most matters concerning property and civil-affairs, which for them are dealt with in the Koran, which is rather a code of government than a book of purely religious precepts. In particular, this would have taken away all judicial functions from the French,—clearly an impossible position. To overcome the *contretemps*, therefore, the French were reduced to the subterfuge of declaring that the agreement of 1830 had been annulled by the consequent revolt, and that a hasty convention signed after the demolition of Fort l'Empereur could not logically be invoked to settle details of organization half a century later.<sup>3</sup>

But the general difficulty remained, and more and more the French adopted the negative policy of destruction. Even Leroy-Beaulieu, than whom no one had colonial interests more at heart, held that all that would be necessary would be to break the tribal system, collective property, and the polygamous family, concluding that "these three points obtained, there would only remain certain details which would easily solve themselves."<sup>4</sup> He might have added that, if these reforms were obtained, there would remain no Arab organization, but only a mass of unorganized individuals, floating between a shattered past and a hopeless future. Indeed, France seemed to be aiming at such a consummation as far as possible. The tribes were thrust back, their lands expropriated, and their organizations attacked. Decrees attempted even to obliterate the old tribal names and to split up the tribes into smaller unities called *douars*. Tribal organization was obliterated in the Tell and diminished throughout the interior; and, when France reached the outskirts of Kabylie in 1868, the confusion became worse.<sup>5</sup> The difference between Arabs and Berbers was not sufficiently grasped, and so the

<sup>3</sup> R. Aynard, *L'Œuvre française en Algérie* (1912), pp. 144-145.

<sup>4</sup> L. de Saussure, *Psychologie de la Colonisation française dans ses Rapports avec les Sociétés Indigènes* (1899), p. 89.

<sup>5</sup> Aynard (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 432.

modified feudalism of the Arabs, at least in so far as the French sanctioned it, was superimposed on the fighting democratic Berbers of the Kabylie mountains. France, by partially Islamizing the Aurès, the people of which had fought for centuries against such a consummation, was naturally faced by a series of insurrections from 1879 onwards. It was only in the far desert-oases, where limited resources held back the French, and where perforce familial and judicial and property matters were left intact in the hands of the natives, that there was no trouble. Elsewhere in Berber lands, the tribal organizations of government, especially the tribal gathering or *djemaa*, a ready-made legislative and executive organ, were as far as possible uprooted. The only result was chaos and hatred where abstention would have meant tranquillity.

Perhaps the basic cause for the failure of these early native policies was that the acts enforced were based on no religious policy. In a country where religion permeated every phase of life, France had evolved no such policy, and, save when Bugeaud sent the Roches mission to the Holy City of Karouan in 1841, had not even seriously attempted to. Indeed, until the time of the newer policies of 1889, Bugeaud was the only French colonial of note who really stood against the *refoulement* idea. He emphasized the importance of native co-operation, and held that the association of the natives in economic development and a respecting of their customs, were the high roads to success. "Each Arab who enriches himself will become our partisan," he wrote; "he will be an enemy less and an ally more."<sup>6</sup>

But this was a voice in the wilderness, and France maintained the policy of *refoulement*, and carried it with her forces of occupation to her other domains. The age-old and quite adequate organizations of Indo-China were simply broken, save during the interim rule of Paul Bert (1886), and the destruction was the worse because of the religious basis and the force of tradition in Indo-Chinese life. The mandarin-system, based on competitive examination and the Chinese respect for learning, could have been adapted to French uses: instead, France simply destroyed it, and alienated both governing-classes and people.<sup>7</sup> In the Pacific, the same thing occurred; the New Caledonians were ruthlessly driven back to "native reserves" in the mountain interior, and their chiefly organization broken; the Tahitians found their native kingdoms shattered; the Marquesans were reduced to paralysed masses of individuals; and, in the whole ocean, only in the isolated Iles sous le Vent were the native organizations respected,—and they were, and still are, an exception. In Africa, the Congo and the Senegal had a similar experience,

<sup>6</sup> Article by Besson in *L'Afrique française*, March, 1921, p. 101.

<sup>7</sup> Chap. XI, II, *infra*. De Saussure (1899), *op. cit.*, pp. 143-149.

although in four communes of the latter, ample recompense was deemed to have been given by bestowing on the natives all the rights of French citizens. And right through the period of militaristic expansion (1894–1906) this tendency remained, and may still be discerned in the French colonial organization. Arthur Girault, the most exhaustive analyst of French colonial methods, sums up in favour of a strong hand. “A hand of iron beneath a glove of velvet,—that must always be the rule in our relations with the natives”<sup>8</sup>; and colonial theorists frequently reiterate that “domination” is the only reasonable and practical policy in so far as the natives are concerned, or at the least, “a policy of beneficent tutelage.” The *refoulement motif*, predominant to 1889, has never quite disappeared.

But, by the time Tunisia and Indo-China were acquired, that is, when France was commencing the organization of her new Empire in earnest, it was evident that there had to be a new theory of native policy,—or rather, *some* theory, because previous policies had been almost entirely negative and haphazard. The millions of Indo-China and Tunisia could clearly not be driven back as the Araḡo-Berbers of Algeria had been, and France had to evolve a plan of accommodation. Moreover, even had the pressure of population not necessitated a changed policy in Tunisia and the Far East, the obvious breakdown of *refoulement* in Algeria showed the need for some change.

With the need thus evident, the direction of change—towards assimilation—was decided upon with curiously little hesitation. The idea of assimilation fitted in with the general mentality of the French in the later eighties, and seemed to be so obvious and so suited to the needs of the occasion as to admit of no dispute. In the first place, it was based on the classical spirit,—that blend of philosophical humanitarianism and universal panaceas and a naïvely egotistic belief in the absolute finality of French civilization. French civilization represented the apex of development, the matrix of life; and the highest duty of a nation was to extend to less fortunate peoples its universally applicable principles. As Condorcet said, “a good law is good for all men, just as a sound logical proposition is sound everywhere.” Assuming that the bases of French civilization were justified (and to deny this would have been to deny the rule of reason), it was only logical to wish that it should be extended, as far as possible, to all men. That they could accept and appreciate its blessings was beyond doubt, for was not the veriest savage “Man,”—that reasoning creation of the philosophers? Isolating man from physiological and environmental differences, the philosophers had created an “absolute man,” a creature of reason and logic, and argued

<sup>8</sup> Girault (1921), *op. cit.*, Part 2, p. 165.

that, if the obscuring masses of superstition and barbarous institutions were removed, this "absolute man" could respond to the needs of Western civilization. It was not a question of Betsimisaraka or Bassamba or Malekula cannibal, but of "Man" in this sense,—a reasoning human being everywhere potentially and intrinsically the same, and distinguished one from the other by surface differences which were not so much fundamental as accidental and eradicable. The philosophers did not see an anthropophagic savage sunk in an abyss of degradation and almost sub-human: nor did they see an Annamite, say, embedded in the accumulated tradition of centuries, and thinking no thought and performing no action unrelated to that tradition: they saw only an abstract personality, so constituted that all were on an equality,—"Man." This triumph of logic, though non-existent in actuality, and as impossible of realization as "the economic man" or "Crusoe" of the classical economists, and though as untrue to actual fact as Adolf Bastian's later theory of *Elementargedanken*, served as the basis on which the entire native policy of the French was erected after 1889. Everything depended on this basic assumption of a potential and realizable equality between all men, and on the universal applicability of just laws. "We wish to make a declaration for all men, for all times, and for all countries, and to serve as an example for the world," said the promulgators of the Declaration of the Rights of Man in 1792; and this idea was revived in the later nineteenth century, and instituted as the very *primum mobile* for colonial activity in every field and direction.<sup>9</sup>

The situation was dominated by Rousseau's interpretation of savage man and by the enthronement of logic and reason: mere mundane matters like impassable geographical and racial barriers did not count. The philosophers had never seen a cannibal-feast on the Marquesan *maraes*, or the refined methods of torture in Dahomey, or the organized brutishness of West African life; and looked on savages as harmless and rather interesting mortals something like the miniature blackboys who waited on Milady, or as blissfully attractive as Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's creations, or, at a later date, Loti's Rarahu; and to the assimilator, all men were capable of becoming civilized, for was there not an essential unity of mankind? This was almost a religion in France in the late eighties, and, at the Colonial Congress of 1889, which gave birth to the theory of assimilation in its modern form, one speaker had to withdraw the phrase "inferior races."<sup>10</sup> Gustave Le Bon alone stood

<sup>9</sup> For growth of this idea, see Vignon (1919), *op. cit.*, p. 191 *et seq.*—a masterly analysis.

<sup>10</sup> *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National*, 1889-1890, debate in Vol. I, p. 16.

out against the sentimental and subjective dogmatism of the majority, and his speech was bitterly attacked.<sup>11</sup> The prevailing argument was that if the Romans could so completely civilize the savages of Gaul, surely the Frenchmen, with their wider culture and greater advantages, could win over the Asiatics and Africans in their colonial Empire! The only difference between the most primitive cannibal of the Upper Congo and a Paris professor, to this school, was in the degree of education. All men were potentially equal, and there were no impassable barriers in the way of the realization, almost the immediate realization, of that equality. Taine had said that, in the preceding century, race simply did not exist on the Stage or in literature, and certainly, in 1889, the existence of the most elementary racial facts was denied. Ancestral heritages, geographical conditions, innate racial differences—none of these were admitted: there was nothing in the civilization of Annamites or Arabs that could not be obliterated, and nothing to prevent a complete transplantation of our culture to them.

Such a position seems remarkable, and yet it may be easily accounted for by the lack of any innate sense of racial superiority with the French, combined with a certain naïve egoism regarding French civilization and strengthened by faith in a logical principle. A formula was held to be sufficiently powerful to overcome the most obdurate foreign race: assimilation could do everything. Thus, even Paul Bert, a liberal, as his first duty on reaching Tonkin, fixed the Rights of Man to the walls of Hanoi, and his colleagues in general saw in the age-old Indo-Chinese civilizations "only institutions hostile to our domination," institutions which "we had to break in order to transform these races to the image of our own."

The next factor supporting this position was the belief in logic. If it were reasonable for a certain principle to apply to the conditions of France, and if the bases of that principle were unassailable there, it stood to reason that they would be so anywhere. Otherwise, there would be varying concepts of what was logical in varying latitudes,—a position intolerable if reason were to be in the ascendant. Thus, if logic decreed a certain symmetry and order in Paris, that symmetry had to hold in Saigon and Algiers and Réunion: and, to support this, there entered the centralizing tendency so obvious in French organization.

The upshot was belief in assimilation to French models in every mode of life,—social, economic, political, racial. The colonies had to be French départements and nothing else, and the natives French citizens. The idea was by no means a new one in French colonization. The Convention, in the Constitution of the Year III, had declared that "the colonies are an integral part of the Republic, and are submitted to the same

<sup>11</sup> Le Bon's address is in full in de Saussure, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-133.

constitutional laws. They are divided into *départements*.”<sup>12</sup> The theory of assimilation could not be more simply stated, and it is a striking commentary on the attitude towards all the anthropological advance in the intervening century to note how easily and completely such a theory could be adopted in the changed conditions of 1889. But there was this difference,—that no previous system was as rigid as that of 1889. Even Rousseau had admitted variations between savage peoples, and even the revolutionary Constitution of the Year VII had recognized the need of special laws for certain colonies : whereas, on the other hand, the Colonial Congress of 1889 insisted on a rigid universality of its theory. If facts and theory did not coincide, the facts had to be moulded to the theory, and not *vice versa*. “All the efforts of colonization,” ran its final resolution, “must tend to propagate amongst the natives our language, our methods of work, and gradually the spirit of our civilization.”<sup>13</sup> It was a doctrine of assimilation *à outrance*, exceptions to which would be confessions of failure.

The peculiar thing is how this theory was accepted, and actually put into force, without discussion or exposition. Not only was it not attacked and discussed : it was hardly mentioned, so obvious and incontrovertible did it seem. Le Bon stood out, but then everybody knew that he was a heretic ! And this attitude was evident in the writings of the leading colonial theorists. Girault saw in assimilation only the opposite of the English autonomy, only a centralizing point of view : Wahl, in his authoritative work on Algeria, accepted it as a matter of course : de Lanessan, even in his *Principes de Colonisation*, did not take the trouble to analyse it : Leroy-Beaulieu accepted it without question : and Vignon (at first) took it as meaning a fusion of the natives with their conquerors and a gradual penetration of French ideas—consummations so natural and obvious as to admit of no cavil. Not one effective voice was raised either against the fundamentally illogical nature of assimilation, or against the virtual impossibility of converting such a theory into practice. Liberty, equality, and fraternity were in the air, all construed on the best orthodox lines of the *Code Napoléon* and eighteenth-century “reason” ; and France saw Papeete and Dakar and Insulah only as distant suburbs of Paris, different at the moment but ultimately to be brought into line.

From 1889 onwards, assimilation was thus accepted. Everywhere, political development was to be as far as possible Europeanization : hence the representation of the colonies in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, and the institution of *communes* as the basis of local government in the farthest colony. Algeria and Cochin-China, both hotbeds

<sup>12</sup> Isaac Report to Congress of 1889, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 5 *et seq.*

<sup>13</sup> Report of Congress of 1889, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 21 ; Vol. II, p. 51.

of assimilation, received practically the same organization, the violent contrasts between Berber and Annamite society notwithstanding. The French criminal Code, and even the civil Code, were introduced everywhere, and local customs not taken into account. All education was in French and on French literary models, for the pearl-diver of the Paumotus as for the Senegalese tribesmen. No colony and no sphere of activity, except the protectorate of Tunisia, stood outside this theory in the nineties.<sup>14</sup>

Naturally, difficulties soon emerged, and it became evident how much the assimilators were the slaves of a theory. The fundamental criticism was that this system, introduced in the name of logic, was essentially illogical, for how was it logical to transfer a theory based on one set of facts to other, and quite opposite, sets of facts? Such a transference meant going from like to unlike, and it would have been just as logical to have argued from the old-established Chinese civilization of Annam and to have urged its extension everywhere, for did it not perfectly meet the situation, had it not achieved balance by the very fact of centuries of survival, and was it not based on a philosophy?

Secondly, assimilation was not founded on facts, but on theory and desires; and the call of the new colonial position was for hard facts, particularly in the economic sphere. Assimilation not only neglected facts, but positively flew in their face. It was a dream, a tendency, an ideal, but not a policy capable of being enforced in practice, as the breakdown in New Caledonia and Cochin-China showed, and as was manifested by the position of the native "citizens" of the Senegalese *communes* and the five Indian towns.

Further, it approached colonial problems from the wrong end. The colonies, presenting essentially new problems as they did, needed some practical compromise to meet the facts, and not any theory superimposed from above. Each colony was a world in itself, each had special problems, and, divided between the Moslem and Confucian and fetishist worlds, had practically nothing in common except the tricolour. It was the differences between them that had to be stressed, and, especially in the sphere of native affairs, a series of policies evolved to take into account these differences. There were abysmal gaps between the cannibals of the Marquesas and the semi-civilized Senegalese, and even between the Laos Kha and the Annamite within Indo-China. There were differences within and between the colonies, and so the uniform automatism of assimilation was absurd.

Here entered the anthropological argument. In the last years of

<sup>14</sup> For its extreme form in the Antilles, see *Compte Rendu du Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1909, p. 203.

the century, Bastian's theory of *Elementargedanken*, viewing savage man the world over as very much on an equality, was dying, and the organized complexity of every native society was being demonstrated,—a complexity largely determined by local conditions. Taine had led the way by stressing the fundamental importance of environment, and the thundering declamations of the German school under Ratzel and Frobenius had gone further, making environmental conditions so important as to shatter the old theory of "Abstract Man" and to postulate essentially varying types. Then, from different angles, Gobineau and Darwin and Virchow were all helping to dissipate the French notions of universalism and assimilation to one culture, and, in particular, the positivist ethnological researches of the de Broca school gave a practical support to the above-mentioned theorists. But the greatest of all in influencing French colonial thought was Gustave Le Bon in his *Lois Psychologiques de l'Evolution des Peuples*, and even in his protests at the Colonial Congress of 1889. And the point was that all of these works, philosophical and anthropological, just coincided with the expansionist period of French colonial policy.<sup>15</sup> Interest in these problems, as it were, focused from many directions on one point, and the result was to show the absurdity of assimilation in theory and practice.

In consequence, it became evident that civilizations could not be uprooted in the facile manner of the assimilators, and completely new civilizations implanted, irrespective of geographical conditions and religion and the traditions of the past, and the needs of the situation, and the myriad other bases on which culture was built. "Civilizations are incommunicable," said Gobineau, and this was equally obvious as one descended the scale. Indeed, any tampering with the lower civilizations was even more serious than with the more advanced, because, the lower one went in the scale of civilization, the more were the various parts of life interdependent and fused into one inextricable whole, and the more even a slight innovation had revolutionary results. A reform at one stage meant not only a change of that magnitude, but a disturbance of the whole balance, and by reason of the interaction between the various parts of native life, a destructive influence on practically the whole culture. Native civilizations were built on custom and immobility, and, once questioning and change came, the whole tended to topple.

Nor was the change merely one affecting the structure of the native civilization: it caused a drift in native minds, perhaps the greatest problem colonial reformers have to face. The native, seeing the foundations of the old order crumble (and it must be remembered that almost certainly the structure that was being destroyed was on a religious basis, or at

<sup>15</sup> Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, pp. 158-159.



least some manner of religious sanction), and drifting between old and new, became a passive and inert disbeliever; and, in the Pacific, and Western Madagascar, and parts of West Africa and the Congo, simply died, in that causeless way in which natives can die. The disease of change, coupled with the disillusioned hopelessness that change engenders under such conditions, had smitten them down. For such people, an unwisely hastened assimilation, an assimilation based on destroying instead of merely adding to what was already there, meant racial decline: with the more virile natives, it was ineffective, and simply meant a breach with the past and no adequate return for the future. For these sections, and this argument applies especially to the Annamites and Arabs, the reform was a failure. Native mentality did not change in the manner expected by the Paris theorists: the more complaisant natives may have added the new elements to what was already there, just as they tolerantly added the white man's gods to their already well-stocked pantheon; but the additional elements remained superfluous and extraneous—over and above, and in no sense synthesized with, their culture as a whole. A race can evolve only in the sense of its own mentality, only in the shadow of its own traditions: and it was the failure to recognize this fact that vitiated so many of the French policies for the Arab and the Annamite. The Moslem or the Confucian was a creature of his religious past, and apart from that knew no existence: to break this down meant not only "de-racializing" him, but reducing him to simply a living animal, with no place in the universe. As concerned the native, therefore, assimilation turned out to be either unavailing or destructive.

Moreover, if the race in question could shed its own past so easily, it was clear that some necessary element of vitality was wanting, for such an anæmic acquiescence symbolized a general decadence. Real progress could only be in the light of the native's past and on the basis of the long anterior development: development had to be in some sense a continuation and not a cataclysmic break. As Le Bon said, "the laws of social evolution are as rigorous as those of the evolution of organisms," and entailed gradual adaptation as the primary necessity of development.

This meant that such success as was ostensibly due to the process of assimilation was probably a superficial one, and even the assimilators were perplexed by the ephemeral nature of the changes produced by their Arab policy. While it was impossible to make the Arabs of the interior *douars* adopt French ideas (they did not respond to the facilities for naturalization, or acquiring French "civil status," or education or legal opportunities), those nearer the towns or in the coastal belt acquired simply a veneer of civilization, shed on the slightest pretext. Even

M. P. Coeur, a believer in assimilation and one of its theoretical exponents, had to admit that twenty years passed under the French flag did not change the mentality of the Arab,<sup>16</sup> and that often repatriated *turcos*, who, according to the theory of assimilation, should, by coming into contact with the order and discipline of French life, have been agents of civilization, were most active in stirring up the Moslem masses to disaffection. Their French civilization was laid aside with their uniform. With the enfranchised Senegalese, the case was still clearer, for the majority, having taken no uniform, had not changed even to that extent. The gap of centuries and tens of centuries could not be bridged in a moment, even by education. *Natura non facit saltus*: and the native was not such a superman as to be able to master the spirit and the details of Occidental civilization in a few years, even had he the desire to do so.

Arguing on this line, one reaches the next flaw in assimilation,—that there is no justification for the position that what is beneficial for the peculiar conditions of European civilization and the idiosyncrasies of European mentality may serve likewise for the African fetishist or the Asiatic ancestor-worshipper. "The beneficent institution of fee-simple" is a case in point: even the Torrens Act, designed especially to prevent confusion and abuse with land-titles, produced quite opposite results in Algeria and Tunisia, because, failing to take into account the childish wastefulness and the naïve unsophistication of the natives in question in matters of alienation (from our point of view), it proved a means of spoliation and loss to them. So too, the idea of individualism, transplanted wholesale from Europe to societies organized on a group-basis, and thinking only in terms of communalism, proved a disintegrating factor rather than an advance.<sup>17</sup> The idea of individual responsibility for crimes in New Caledonia, for instance, led, not to safeguards for the innocent and punishment for the guilty, but to a disintegration of tribal cohesion and social security. And the individualization of land-tenure in Algeria and Tonkin and Tahiti produced results quite opposite to those anticipated, and proved in many cases a doubtful advance, if an advance at all. Similarly with the abolition of slavery in the sugar-islands and the attack on domestic slavery in Africa, both of which, the latter in particular, were shown to have a considerable number of good points, under the conditions of life in that particular environment.<sup>18</sup>

All of these failures showed that there is no universally applicable social law, and that the determining feature of native policy should be not European ideas, not any general theory, but the conditions of the

<sup>16</sup> M. P. Coeur, *L'Assimilation des Indigènes Musulmans*.

<sup>17</sup> S. H. Roberts, *Population Problems of the Pacific* (1926), p. 226.

<sup>18</sup> L. Vignon, *Un Programme de Politique Coloniale* (1919), p. 374 et seq.

tribe and the question at issue, and not as an isolated question but as a component part of the whole structure of the tribal civilization. A neglect of this curious interaction of the various phases of native life explains why essentially good ideas for the tribe in question, may, if introduced at an inopportune moment or as unconnected with the general scheme of native life, result in untold harm : and how much the more will this apply to ideas which, however desirable or otherwise from a European point of view, are inapplicable to native life ? It is the general fabric of native policy, with its inextricably interwoven threads, the good affecting the bad, and *vice versa*, that has to be considered : and the only possible validity of any reform is in its relation, its assimilability, to the whole native structure and to that peculiar native thought which vitalizes the whole and clothes it with meaning. Abstract logic or desirability under other conditions is quite beside the point, for, if anything, native life in general is organized and interconnected illogicality : custom knows little of logic ; and native life, if stable and virile, means the rule of custom. And it is there, rather than with any outside theory or with any system painfully evolved for a part of another continent and under the conditions of Western industrialism, that the problem lies. Any valid solution must be in accord with the existing premises, and not determined by one's concept of what is desirable in the abstract.

The need was clearly for natural development on local lines, based on the needs of each particular tribal entity, and taking into account the conditions surrounding tribal life ; in a word, for a growth from below, supervised and directed, it is true, by the French officials, but still on natural foundations and proportioned to the facts of the situation. This method of approach was the only safeguard against " deracialization " and the resultant sapping of native vigour, and the only preventive of the submergence of the native, a disillusioned and cynically hopeless being, beneath the flood of new ideas. Evolution may be hastened, but not completely changed from the old ancestral road, for that way lies uprooting and mere destruction. The institutions that had survived the past were the security of the future, and not, as the advocates of *refoulement* and assimilation argued, simply obstacles to progress and efficiency ; the very fact of survival in unfavourable circumstances was sufficient to prove the contrary.

It was little wonder, then, that the assimilation of the natives to French standards proved impossible in practice. Haiti, Liberia, and the French Antilles demonstrated this where the majority of the population were negroes ; and the absurdities of the *régime* in the Senegal and French India were bywords in French colonial circles,—a perpetual

colonial comedy. In the excessive zeal of liberalism in 1848, the natives of five *communes* in the Senegal were given the rights of citizens and organization on an entirely French model. In practice "they came to vote in disciplined groups, under the command of native chiefs, fittingly paid in advance by the candidate": and competent observers, with a typically French absence of racial discrimination, hold that the natives so privileged, the Oulouf, have become insolent ne'er-do-wells.<sup>19</sup> In French India, where the natives have voted since 1875, Brahmins and pariahs cannot touch each other, yet are equal before the electoral urn: and Hindu native leaders really monopolize the votes. In Algeria there was never a *contretemps* of this kind, although assimilation in education and justice and land-matters resulted in the gravest abuses, and the native suffered almost as much as during the previous period of *refoulement*. In Indo-China the position was worse, because there the attempt to progress through the shattering of the religious-civil Chinese civilization meant the passive resistance of the natives, and thus a ban on all advance. Until the idea of advance on native lines was sanctioned, every province of Indo-China, especially Cochin-China and Tonkin, languished.

Under these circumstances, it would be no exaggeration to say that the unwise assimilation of Algeria and Indo-China to French models in the eighties and nineties of last century represented the nadir of French colonization, because the entries were all on the debit side of the ledger, and the suffering had no noticeable compensation. Assimilation was found to be impossible in Arab and Oriental countries, because of the linking of State and society with religion, and because of the ineradicability of Mohammedanism and Buddhism: while, in negro countries, still different objections arose, for such a development was premature, and its goal unwise, at least for the mass of the natives. Even had such a forced development been possible, and even had the superiority of European civilization been so little as to admit of a bridging of the gap in one person's lifetime, assimilation for the majority meant exploitation by an oligarchy, the tyranny of an *intelligentsia*-trained minority, as the sugar-islands clearly proved. Even in Algeria, for instance, it was estimated that, from 1877 to 1901, there were barely 500 intellectuals for a native population of five millions, and many of these had a culture based on ideas such as an Englishman educated in the Middle Ages would have.<sup>20</sup> By a process of elimination, therefore, assimilation was seen to be possible only where there was no ineradicable pre-existing civilization, and, at once, any based on a religion as virile as Mohammedanism fell outside this category. This meant that assimilation was

<sup>19</sup> L. Sonolet, *L'Afrique Occidentale Française* (1912), pp. 12-14.

<sup>20</sup> J. Alaude, *La Question Indigène dans l'Afrique du Nord*, p. 57.

possible only where there was a European majority or where the natives were so backward as to know no adequate organization. But assimilation in the first case was meaningless, and in the second absurd and worthless ! And it afforded no solution for the great problems of France's Moslem and Buddhist populations. In a word, it was an inapplicable theory, and, so long as it dominated colonial activity, the real position was that the French had no native policy. The native just drifted, and everybody suffered.<sup>21</sup>

The result was that assimilation gradually fell into disrepute. The Colonial Congress of 1889 was unanimously in its favour : that of 1900 was a little dubious, but endorsed its principles : the Congress of 1906 frankly attacked it in every branch. Till 1899 it may be said that assimilation was dominant both in theory and fact : in the next decade, the theory was maintained, but the policy actually enforced was changing, and the " protectorate " idea, sanctioned by the experience of Tunisia and Indo-China (after the time of de Lanessan), was emerging in opposition. Then, during the third stage from 1910 to 1914, assimilation was seen to be no longer tenable in theory, but the new policy had not yet emerged, and there was a drift in actual fact. French efforts in native policy were not made cohesive in this period by any policy.

But, after that, an increasing development on local lines became manifest, and was defined, both in theory and fact, as "*association*,"—a variant of the protectorate idea. The trend had for long been away from assimilation, which by 1906 was seen to be doomed : the difficulty was to determine the new policy, and to let the changing facts become to some degree stabilized, before the new policy was decided upon. New influences were coming into play in the native world in the early part of this century, equally for the negroes and the Moslems and the Buddhists ; and France wanted to know just what those new influences implied before she decided on a new policy. One native policy had been decided upon apart from fact : and, in the light of this experience, France was now proceeding more cautiously, and was to a greater degree letting the theory be moulded by the changing facts themselves. The facts, and not philosophy, were the shaping factor : France, in her native policy, was considering the natives more and policy less,—a change of emphasis forced on her by the exigencies of the practical situation.

The bases of the new policy were simple. It was a cry of—back to the native, emphasize local conditions, consider the past of each tribe, mould policies to the practical needs of the tribe, limit objectives to efforts which can be realized, look on projected reforms as they will

<sup>21</sup> For criticisms, see *L'Afrique Française*, 1923, p. 252 ; Démons, *Le Peuple Algérien* (1906), pp. 589–593.

appear to the native, build on the native past by the native present and for the native future, and enlist the co-operation of the natives themselves. It was a rule on native lines, but with a place left for desirable innovations and, as a rule, as far as possible, in the hands of the natives themselves ! The objective was limited but practical, and the policy was in essence constructive, and not destructive. Progress was to be realized by gradual and carefully consolidated steps on the firm foundations of the existing native life : there was to be a natural movement from the existing to the desired, and a development from the traditional past, instead of a soul-searing breach with everything that that past entailed to the natives. In a word, it was all that was implied in social education, in the literal sense of " education "—as a " leading-out " : and everything depended on the idea of the continuity of institutional advance. No place was left for far-reaching innovations which had proved beneficial under the utterly different conditions of another civilization, separated, as civilizations go, by thousands of years from the scene of the actual experiment, and, even could the gap be bridged by some kind of a time-machine, having nothing in common with it. The old policy had ignored time as well as geography : the new one did not step beyond the immediate problem in the given locality at that particular moment in the evolution of the civilization concerned. This does not mean to say that salutary reforms and efforts of modernization were given no place : it was simply that they were by no means viewed as the sole ends of native policy as they had hitherto been : under the new orientation, they were but one element, and, even then, only to the degree to which they fitted in. Still less was any scheme of reform deemed to be a universal panacea : the idea of universality, and even of general reforms, was now in the discard. The new policy called for an unobtrusive continuation of past development, along the same lines in the main, but with the obstacles removed, and the obviously undesirable features of life as far as possible pruned away.

But, in essence, the development was to be a natural continuation. Of course, coupled with it, was to go reform on European lines, for the French had to look to the future as well as to the past, and had to introduce reforms where breaches with the past were salutary. But the keynote of the policy lay in its dualism. The old policy of assimilation had been a unitary one—development on European lines alone : so too, the new policy, by an excessive reaction, might become equally unitary,—development on native lines alone (or the stagnation that this would imply) : but the real goal was in a kind of dyarchy, a sharing of functions between European and native, with development primarily on native lines, and suited to the actual conditions of native existence, but coupled with

such European innovations as would be desirable from time to time. The degree of European interference would be the elastic factor: it would vary from time to time and from place to place, according to the position of the tribe in question and a multitude of facts, such as their temperamental disposition, their economic status, the flexibility of their institutions, and the like. The European share thus continually fluctuated, and on it depended both the reality of co-operation and the reality of progress. It was to be a genuine association of partners, one more advanced and training the other, but along lines which the backward partner could understand and which would be beneficial to him in his own environment. But, in the last resort, the onus of securing progress rested on the European, and he had to secure this objective first of all. The well-being of the native was the aim, and even change on native lines might not be acceptable to the unduly conservative natives: in that case, the European had to bear the brunt of the situation, for, given the fact of economic change, progress there had to be, as a mere standing-still was impossible under the changing circumstances. The fishers of the Congo and the hillmen of Laos could not be left aside: they had to evolve in their own surroundings, and, if the new policy speeded-up the rate of evolution too much, they had to be helped in the process of re-adaptation. *Association* implied joint development, but could not conceivably mean a mere stultification for the native or *laissez-faire* for the European. It involved a difficult division of responsibilities, but it was necessitated by the new forces that, willy-nilly, were changing native life; and it certainly left a tangible place for the native and provided a practicable policy for the European administrator.

The policy thus means the association of both natives and Europeans, a real sphere of activity being left for each. For the native, there is the respect of his own organizations, a development along lines compatible with his past, and a part left for him in the future: and, on the other hand, the European has a place for priority in the scheme, for, while there is a building on the sound foundations of the past, an equally important feature is reform and progress and a reasonable degree of modernization in the future. This co-operation implies a turning of the back upon the two previous native policies,—upon the old idealistic humanitarianism, because its objectives were too inclusive and impractical; and equally upon the policy of exploitation, because it was both undesirable and impolitic. To put the matter as crudely as possible, association pays. Political assimilation was seen to be Utopian, and domination an anachronism: the new *via media* was *association*. Indeed, the logic of the new position was so clear that wonder was expressed at the sway of assimilation for so long. “Let us regard each colony as a

'native-city,' which must evolve under our direction and with our aid," ran the new theory, but each having a development normal to itself, and not trying unnaturally to conform to the evolution of some other differently situated colony or the mother-country.

The best definition of the new policy came from Jules Harmand, who may be considered as its leading exponent:—

"It teaches always toleration and liberalism in autocracy: it prescribes everywhere a scrupulous respect of manners, customs, and religions: it substitutes everywhere co-operation in place of the exploitation of native forces pure and simple, and instead of the usurpation of their goods and landed property. It is favourable to their intellectual development. Wishing to render their work more personal and interesting, it tends to render it more productive. Seeking a *rapprochement* of spirits and their union in a *rapprochement* of interests, it facilitates submission. On the other hand, a realistic and wise policy of association reserves all the rights of domination with an unshakable firmness, and considers all of its needs. Nor does it acquiesce in preparing or realizing an equality that is never possible: on the contrary, it establishes a certain balance or compensation between reciprocal services. Far from allowing domination to become enervated, it wishes to reinforce it by making it less rough and less hostile. Thus, it aims at making domination more efficient and more productive of reciprocal utilities, at the same time making it more tolerable, and thus reducing to the minimum the always sterile and costly use of force. It wishes to better the lot of the aborigine in all ways, but only in directions that are profitable to him,—by letting him evolve in his own way; by maintaining each in his place, his function, his rôle; by touching native customs and traditions with a very light hand only, and, on the contrary, using their organization to reach these objectives. In a word, association is the systematic rejection of assimilation, and tends to substitute for the necessarily rigid and oppressive régime of direct administration *that of indirect rule*, with a conservation, albeit a well-watched and well-directed conservation, of the institutions of the subject people, and with a respect of its past." <sup>22</sup>

This clearly differentiated association from both domination and assimilation, and yet shows that it is no mere jugglery with vague phrases, no mental gymnastics, and that it is, above all things, practical. In a word, it is very akin to the English concept of "indirect rule," or, better still, to the newer idea, wherein the need of State tutelage is more emphasized, and which is called "modified indirect rule." <sup>23</sup> It is a working with the natives and along native lines, in so far as their ideas can be made compatible with the necessary degree of progress,—that is, it is back to native affairs, *as far as possible*. And, in the last phrase, with its implications for the native and for the European, lies the key to the entire situation!

<sup>22</sup> Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, pp. 158-159.

<sup>23</sup> For elaboration of this theory, see S. H. Roberts, *Population Problems of the Pacific* (1926), Chap. 7, Part 10.



The idea, in an embryonic form, was found early in French colonization: even when the bulk of French efforts were clearly by direct rule on European models, there was generally some undercurrent based on a *rapprochement* with the natives,—a vague, almost unanalysable understanding which seemed to come naturally to the French and to bewilder their adversaries. Martin and Dupleix had realized something of this in India, and Montcalm had succeeded with the Hurons in Canada. And there were many other instances of a tactful collaboration between French and natives: and indeed these were throughout a disturbing element when one tried to explain French native policy only in terms of *refoulement* and *cantonnement*. In the Second Empire this was still more noticeable. There were the reforms of Paul Bert (1886) and de Lanessan (1891–1893) in Tonkin, of Paul Cambon (1881–1886) in his organization of Tunisia, of Galliéni in Madagascar (perhaps the most successful of all), and, at a later stage, of Lyautey in Morocco. In particular, France was stirred in the early nineties, and before the popularity of de Lanessan or the triumph of Galliéni, by the peaceful missions of Binger and Monteil in Central Africa, the more so because the tradition of decades had been that only brusque military action could avail in those regions. These outstanding colonials, by acting in a non-military direction, and by stressing development on native lines just at this auspicious moment, greatly aided the emergence of the new theory and, in fact, removed it from the world of theory and correlated it with practical conditions from the outset.

Thus, the theory in its modern form evolved simultaneously in colonial practice and colonial philosophy. On the theoretical side, “*association*,” deriving a general support from Fourier, was really implicit in Gustave Le Bon’s attitude at the 1889 Colonial Congress, and explicit in the writings of Jules Harmand. And it was to Harmand that the work of popularization was due. Harmand (1845–1921), having spent a lifetime of service in the Orient, was by no means a mere theorist. He had accompanied Garnier’s first expedition to Tonkin in 1873, had made five difficult journeys in Indo-China, and had then become in succession the French Commissary-General of Tonkin (1883–5), Consul-General at Calcutta, and Minister-Plenipotentiary at Tokio (1894–1907), the variety of his experience making him an authority on comparative colonial policy.<sup>24</sup> His experience was particularly varied as regards the impact between the traditional civilization of the Orient and the forces of the Occident: and indeed, it was on the disintegrating features of this contact that his theory was built. At the Conference of 1889 he insisted on the need of developing from the past, and on considering the Annamites,

<sup>24</sup> *L’Afrique Française*, Feb. 1921, p. 48.

not as so many million featureless individuals, but as a nation with all its accumulated heritage of manners and institutions and even "its relative superiority," in order "to make of it to some degree the companion of our future and our *associate*." The point was re-emphasized in his important introduction to the translation of Strachey's *India* in 1891,<sup>25</sup> especial insistence being laid on the fact that development had to be continuous evolution and not any disastrous breach with the native's past, the more so because, with the tenacity of Oriental civilization, such an enforced breach was futile and could not obliterate the traditions of the past. Harmand expressed the theory in a final form in his treatise, *Domination et Colonisation* (1910), which remains perhaps the best analytic piece of colonial theory in France, and which placed the "association" principle on unassailable foundations.

Here the matter rested until after the war, when there was a great revival in colonial theory, almost entirely along the principle of natives developing according to the needs of their *milieu* and on the foundation of their institutions. Louis Vignon, the veteran authority of the *École Coloniale*, and an erstwhile assimilator, had rescinded his former views, and, in a strikingly comprehensive *Programme de Politique Coloniale* (1919), summed up the experience of the past and the crystallization of future policy along these lines. Sir Frederick Lugard and von der Keeken performed similar services for English and Belgian Africa<sup>26</sup>; and, at the 1921 meeting of the International Colonial Institute, Charles van Vollenhoven gathered together the various trends,<sup>27</sup> and showed how clearly the policy of *association* or its slightly modified variant, the protectorate policy, was in the ascendant in the realm of native administration. Practically no French theorist of note stood outside the new policy: the psychological school of Delafosse and the administrative materialists, whose views Girault expounds, alike favoured this compromise; and by 1919, *association* was as predominant as assimilation had been in 1889. Galliéni and Lyautey set the methods, and theory was even outstripping them. "Each in his own civilization" was the slogan, and the celebrated speech of Waldeck-Rousseau to the French Parliament in June, 1901, where the catchword had first been used and these principles enunciated, was now the gospel of the reformers.<sup>28</sup>

The triumph of the theory, moreover, was aided by the new emphasis on the moral aspects of native administration,—a view-point explained by

<sup>25</sup> Strachey, *L'Inde* (1891), p. xiv.

<sup>26</sup> In *The Dual Mandate in British West Africa* (1923), and *Les Sociétés Bantoues du Congo Belge et les Problèmes de la Politique Indigène* (1920), p. 121, respectively.

<sup>27</sup> *Institut Colonial International. Compte Rendu*, 1921 session, p. 369 *et seq.*

<sup>28</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 15/6/01; compare Delafosse in *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1921, p. 149.

the awakening of interest in the French colonies after they had so conspicuously rallied to France in the war-years. When this active participation in men and money and products actually brought the French Empire home to the Frenchmen of the motherland, a new impetus towards understanding was naturally provided, and the last vestiges of that theory which had looked on natives as raw material either for industry or for experiments in cultural adaptation vanished. The change was the more evident because, ever since 1906, there had been a gradual drift in this direction. The events of the war thus made explicit vague conceptions which were already implicit in the French group-mind, and served indisputably to clinch the contentions which had been gradually pressing to the fore. Apart from the remarkable ideas of Marshal Randon (that quaint mixture of military martinet and social reformer who had governed Algeria in the fifties) and the letters of Napoleon III anent an Arab Kingdom, and the transient awakening of interest about the time of the expansion of 1890, there was really no constructive or permanent interest in native problems until Clemenceau's first Ministry (1906-1909).<sup>29</sup> To secure an adequate representation of the native view-point, he arranged for an elected native-assessor in the Algerian Council-General and aided native interests: and soon a survey was made of all spheres of native policy. The Colonial Congress of 1906 had commenced such a survey, and similar councils of investigation, all publishing exhaustive reports, were held for the main groups of colonies,—for the Old Colonies in 1907, for North Africa in 1909, and for Madagascar in 1910. The question of native military service had become an actual issue in the same years (1907-1912),<sup>30</sup> and naturally touched the native problem from a variety of angles, social and economic as well as purely military: and by 1914 the question of natives taking part in elections was mooted as a general principle and decided in the affirmative.<sup>31</sup> France was thus attacking the native problem comprehensively, for it was realized that neither repression nor drift was adequate under the new conditions.

By this time the approach was clearly a dual one. On the one hand, France simply could not afford to alienate the natives in her new Empire, as she had done the Algerians: if she did so, the very maintenance of the Empire would be extremely problematical. Native collaboration was the only way out of the difficulty, especially because the pressure of depopulation in France made impossible any large extension of the *personnel* employed in the colonies. The demographical position of

<sup>29</sup> V. Piquet, *Les Réformes en Algérie et le Statut des Indigènes* (1919), p. 2.

<sup>30</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 20, 22/2/10; 8/4/11.

<sup>31</sup> E.g., in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 10/2/14.

France and the area of the colonies made native co-operation absolutely inevitable: and co-operation did not mean a negative freedom from insurrection, for, under the conditions, "the passive hostility of the Indo-Chinese was quite as detrimental as armed revolt would have been: it was a positive collaboration, both of act and of spirit, that was needed. Already in 1901, Le Myre de Vilers, the victor of Madagascar, had said, in a colonial-budget report, that "colonial defence is far more a matter of administration and of native policy than a military question," and henceforth this view-point was France's guiding star. On the winning-over of the natives depended the fate of the Empire.

That was the one set of facts: on the other hand, there was a trend in France which would have meant advance on these lines, even had the issue not been forced at the moment, for, since the Congo atrocities of 1905, and especially since the Toqué-Gaud *cause célèbre* in Brazzaville, a wave of humanitarianism had been sweeping over France like an exotic cult. "The reigning superstition," wrote a colonial critic in 1905, "is humanitarianism,—a strange disease engendered by the false idealism of 1789, upheld by literary and political Romanticism, caressed by the pseudo-liberalism of the Lafittes and the Royer-Collards, and recently aggravated by the revival of the Huguenot spirit."<sup>22</sup> It was the dilettante cult of the day, and was supported by the interest in native mentality and in the mysteries of the African bush and Asiatic tradition,—an interest that may almost be described as a sensory search for the exotic. There was a curious blend of the dilettante and the philanthropic,—of the sickened revolt against the Congo atrocities revealed by the last de Brazza mission, and of the interest in Flandin's colonial romances and Delafosse's analysis of the conflict of white and native mentalities. But, whatever its origin and whatever its constitution, this interest served definitely practical purposes in focusing attention on native problems in the decade before 1914, the more so because, in practically every other field, this was a period of colonial disillusion and lethargy and drift.

Thus, when the war came, the French frame of mind was suitably attuned to the reception of the new influences: it was already fertilized ground into which the seed, the rallying of the natives to France, was planted; and the triumph of *association* and *protectorate* was the harvest. Before the war, according to Lucien Hubert, a budget-reporter of the colonies, the ordinary Frenchman's ideas of the colonies came from *Paul et Virginie*, Uncle Tom, and Pierre Loti,<sup>23</sup>—together with the

<sup>22</sup> C. Regismanset, *Questions Coloniales*: 1900-1912, p. 52.

<sup>23</sup> Compare Archimbaud's budget-speech of 1926, in *Journal Officiel*, Dep 2/12/26, or Deps., docts. parl., 1926, No. 3401.

Gauguin idea that the colonies were easily-equipped laboratories for the last refinements of sensual experience, and to this, curiously enough, was added a vague undercurrent of humanitarianism. But the war changed all this unreality, and made the colonial question a national one. "Colonial incorporation" was now the phrase of the day, and to no phase did this apply more than to native policy: improvised governmental empiricism and the equally unconstructive economic exploitation were now both discarded for a continuous constructive policy. How otherwise could it be, when the French had felt a nascent humanitarianism throughout the previous decade, and when they were already speaking of depriving Germany of her possessions for "Colonial unworthiness" (the very phrase implying a certain code of colonial morality to deviate from which was moral failure), and when they had actually seen the march of the colonial natives through France? The Frenchmen now realized the immensity and the scope and the *personal* nature of colonial problems, when they saw colonials of all hues actually living in France,—Arabs and Berbers of the north, Ouloufs and Toucouleurs and Moors and Semitic Peuhls of the west, scarred Bambaras and desert Djermas and Baribas and Gouros of the south, and others from the isolated possessions the world over. Had not the nervous Somalis helped to hold Douamont, and had not the saffron Annamites and the chocolate Kanakas and the tawny Tahitians of the South Seas, and the Hovas and Betsileos and Sakalavas and even the Tanala forest-hunters of Madagascar all come to France? What years of discussion had been unable to effect, the war had done in a few months, and in an impressively spectacular manner such as would appeal to the French temperament.

The native policy of France had received a new meaning, a newer and more immediate significance, and a new orientation as regards its place in general policy. The result was the adoption of the policy of *association*. At present, therefore, assimilation has been completely discarded, and the emphasis is on a limited association, to the extent to which this can afford reciprocal advantages. But there are two clearly held conceptions in this matter. While as much emphasis as possible is laid on native institutions and on development along lines compatible with the native past, it is understood that a reasonable reform is the primary *desideratum*, and that in no case can *association* be construed as an idle *laissez-faire* or a bolstering-up of effete and useless institutions. And, secondly, it is equally clear that the ban on assimilation and the adoption of *association* by no means imply any large degree of devolution. French native policy remains as centripetal as ever, and, in this field as in others, it is only the method that has changed. What Sarraut has called "a more or less hidden abdication of our sovereignty" has

never been considered, either as the present or future need of the native.

But, on the other hand, there are two positive features of the new native policy, the potentialities of which allow an unlimited progress. First is the conviction that "each race has a civilization of its own, derived from the *milieu* in which it has evolved, from its traditions, and from its customs,"<sup>24</sup> and that such a civilization is a plastic and malleable one, capable of adaptation to changing circumstances, and containing within itself the possibility of progressive change. With this goes the kindred conception that there is no such thing as an intrinsically and innately inferior native race. To the French theorist, every race is capable of progress, because there is no immutable gradation from the Nordic down to the cannibal of New Caledonia or the Congo pygmies. France admits, not a permanent inferiority, but only that some races are behind others. She sees only retarded evolution as the explanation of cannibalism in the Marquesas or the degraded social customs of the natives of Laos, and denies any eternal inferiority of even those abysmal savages. But this recognition no longer, as it did in the past, serves as an excuse for an attempted realization of immediate equality: rather does it tend to make present political and administrative equality the more illogical. Different conditions necessitate different measures. "Hence we energetically reject the blind adaptation to all our colonial possessions of the social forms and political *milieu* to which we ourselves have been accustomed."<sup>25</sup> The very concept of ultimate equality, involving as it does the recognition of present inequalities, makes this outlook necessary, for otherwise there would be a ban on all that separates the neolithic savage from the twentieth-century Frenchman.

Therefore, while clearly opposing the traditionally aloof attitude of the English towards native races (even in their indirect rule), and while emphasizing "the human value" of native policy, the French insist on varying methods, proportioned to the degree of backwardness of the tribe concerned. This in no wise denies or even postpones the concession of basic equality, but simply shows that the absence of colour feeling in France and the concession of the intrinsic equality of all races were tempered by practical considerations. Thus it is that French statesmen speak in the same speech of absolute native equality, and yet reject all schemes of naturalization *en masse* and all systems of self-government or universal suffrage on European models. But the two aspects are complementary rather than opposed, and both are logical developments of the premises, whereas the assimilation of former days was

<sup>24</sup> O. Meynier, *L'Afrique Noire* (1911), p. 181.

<sup>25</sup> A. Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, p. 100.

only a one-sided argument, neglecting certain vital factors of the situation. It is the recognition of present differences and ultimate equality, although under different conditions, that gives a meaning to the French idea of the association or collaboration of races, and that clearly distinguishes this policy from assimilation or identity.

There theory rests at present, with a stress both on native development and outside reforms, the degree of association being a varying one according to the local conditions of each case. But, while there is equality, it is a potential rather than an actual equality, and, even then, an equality in difference. No attempted measures of identification are contemplated either for the immediate or the remote future. France has rejected the ideas both of group naturalization and group political privileges. Nothing is to be merely automatic (the naturalization of the Algerians in 1919 does not disprove this, as it was a case *sui generis*, engendered by war-psychology): especially deserving individuals may be naturalized, on the ground of their own worthiness, but that is all. So too, while a greater degree of administrative or financial autonomy is contemplated for the colonies under the Sarraut scheme, there is no general recognition of unlimited native representation in the colonies, other than on the grounds of the individual worthiness of the native group in question. For individual natives and for native groups, such privileges are specific and not general. In a word, association on the French model implies, and leads to, neither autonomy nor identity, but to a working compromise or collaboration within one whole.<sup>36</sup>

In this connection there is a difference of opinion between those who advocate the older "association," and those who plead for the newer "protectorate" idea; and, although the difference in theory seems infinitesimal, and although both policies are clearly based on the same general principles and seek the same goal, the distinction has important consequences in practice, and so cannot be neglected. It has really arisen from two misconceptions. There are those who think that *association* means the collaboration of two equals, and is thus perhaps a policy of the future, but that in the interim there has to be a workable compromise, based on a "Protectorate,"—that is, on the beneficent tutelage of a more advanced race over a backward one evolving in the sense of its own past. But, as has been pointed out, the very basis of *association*, rightly interpreted, is the co-partnership of races at various levels of development, and a joint evolution, not in absolute equality, but in such a degree of equality as the situation seems to warrant.

On the other hand, there are those who say that, by emphasizing the tutelage aspect, *association* is simply disguised assimilation,—a trick

<sup>36</sup> *Journal Officiel*, *Deps.*, 15/6/01 (Waldeck-Rousseau), 5/12/91 (Burdeau).

of the assimilators to make their theory conform to the times. Louis Vignon, for instance, throws the weight of his authority behind this contention, and sees both too much Europeanization and too much reciprocity in *association*.<sup>37</sup> He holds that it is based on an unworkable link and on a permeation by each side of certain phases of the civilization of the other,—an impractical conception, in fact. Therefore, he urges an extension of the “protectorate” policy that France has followed in Tunisia, Morocco and West Africa. But, in actual practice, his policy comes to what has been defined above as *association*, although he would prefer to see the contact of races rather in the nature of segregation. His aim, however, that of anti-assimilation, is frankly *association*. “Let us at once renounce dreams and ideological views and the exportation of grand principles, and let us pretend to be nothing more than tutors or educators to our subjects, presiding over an evolution conformable to natural laws.” By this definition of policy, and by the emphasis on a tutoring or presiding relationship with the natives, he really throws himself into the camp of the associationists, and to quarrel over such matters is really sacrificing policy to hair-splitting differences.

But there is a difference in objective between *association* and “protectorate,”<sup>38</sup> for, while both stress advance on native lines, the first allows a varying part to be played by both Europeans and natives, while the latter definitely cedes priority to the natives, and is more negative than the former. *Association* stresses a compulsory advance suitable to native mentality and to the existing situation, but still imposed by Europeans; whereas a “protectorate” implies development by the natives, with Europeans supervising to a lesser degree, and not interfering unless given practices are clearly anti-social. Both stress native agents and native mentality, but the one approaches from the European angle, the other from the native. One is in essence centripetal, the other the opposite. But, after all, in practice, the difference is little, because both have the common ground of opposing assimilation and considering native needs: both really mean the same thing at present, and it is only the remote future that will be influenced by their slightly varied objectives and principles. If there is not absolute identity between them, the essential accord is given by their common reaction from preceding policies.

French native policy has thus crystallized in the direction of *association* or a “protectorate” policy, tendencies assisted by the “human” spirit in that policy, and by a certain curious sympathy with the native soul,—at least for the negroes, if not so noticeably for the Mohammedans.

<sup>37</sup> Vignon (1919), *op. cit.*, p. 113 *et seq.*

<sup>38</sup> A. de Pourvoirville, *L'Asie Française* (1911), pp. 134-135.



And, since the war, this trend has clearly been reinforced by the marked negrophile reaction in Paris, noticeable alike in the drama and literature and music, and in a general reawakening of the esoteric psychology of the years after 1905. "*L'âme nègre*" is the idea, and, dilettante though the concept is, it undoubtedly influences thought on colonial questions.

But, with this, certain opposite tendencies survive, and "the hand of iron" keeps emerging from "the velvet glove," in Syria and Morocco and the Ivory Coast and New Caledonia, for instance. Thus there is often a frank breaking of native organizations and also a constantly recurring eddy of assimilation. The move to enfranchise certain classes of Algerians in 1919, the council-scheme in Tunisia in 1922, and the political developments in Indo-China since 1923, for instance, all bear testimony to this substratum of influence, this curious survival of a discredited theory.

Out of all these tendencies emerges a native policy which, while predominantly one of *association*, is not in all ways clear-cut and well-defined: the perspective is at times a trifle blurred, as with the treatment of the Algerians; and, though France is aided by a certain ease of understanding primitive life and a partial spirit of tolerance and qualities of orderliness, she is hampered by the conflicting appeal of various theories and the pedantry and power of bureaucrats and jurists. French native policy, therefore, remains at basis a tendency rather than an exclusive theory; although, since 1914, it has been far clearer and more unified and more definitely "native" than it had been heretofore. France for the first time had a native policy in any wise based on the needs of the situation and genuinely determined by native interests; and, even if there were many cross-currents of opinion, this in itself was a great advance—more so than "indirect rule" with the English, because of the greater contrast with what had gone before. France now has a policy which holds, in the main, and which may be defined, as Harmand summed it up in 1910, as "founded on the functional independence of the protected country and the conquering State, and on a respect for the diversity of native customs."<sup>39</sup> And exactly what this means in the way of advance may be seen from a contrast with the absurd theories of assimilation propounded by the Colonial Congress of 1889 and the repression of natives during the period of militaristic expansion after 1894, and during the drift in colonial policy between 1906 and 1914. It is not the all-sufficiency of the *association* policy in itself that counts, nor the fact that it finds numerous exceptions in practice: but it is the obvious advance on preceding policies and the possibilities contained within the new one. The possibilities may be for good or for evil, and may result in more of

<sup>39</sup> Harmand (1910), p. 22; *L'Afrique Française*, July, 1923, p. 252.

that repression that was evident in the Congo, or that desultory and confused alternation of reform and *refoulement* which Algeria has known : but it is something new in French colonial policy that the potentialities for good are present, and not only present but given a place of priority, alike by theorists and statesmen and the men in the field.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CENTRAL ORGANIZATION

#### I. The Ministry of the Colonies

THE most obvious central organization in the French colonial system is naturally the Ministry of the Colonies, and nothing better reflects the haphazard growth of that system than the history and present position of the Ministry. Until thirty years ago, there was no such Ministry, and, even to-day, a fifth of the French colonial population do not come under it, and its general position is by no means clear. The *bureaux* or permanent departments are more powerful than in any other country, the degree of bureaucratic control being a byword, yet three of the major colonies are completely outside their influence. That is, the Ministry is, outside of Parliament, the only body determining colonial policy, for France has none of the subsidiary offices and commissions that England has in this connection. But, on the other hand, it is a Ministry of the Colonies only in name, and, to obtain a general view of colonial policy, or even of everyday colonial happenings, the observer must go to three distinct Ministries. The actual administration of three parts of the colonial Empire is under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior,—not a vague right of determining and co-ordinating general policy, but administration in its narrowest sense. Such a position is, of course, an accident of history and a concession to the immobility of French officialdom rather than a consciously devised plan: nevertheless, it exerts its influence on French colonization,—and that influence cannot by any stretch of the imagination be termed good.

The Ministry of Colonies itself has had a most chequered history in France. The *ancien régime* did not know any "central administration" of the colonies in the sense of rule by *bureaux* in Paris. Richelieu had set up a *Grand Maître* to supervise colonial and commercial matters, but the office was short-lived, and from 1669 to the Revolution, colonial affairs were controlled by the Naval Ministry. Simplest ideas have always characterized French colonial conceptions, and this was perhaps the first of the long chain,—that, inasmuch as the colonies were overseas, it was but seemly that they should be attached to other overseas matters,—

that is, to the department dealing with sea-communications. Save for a breach from 1858 to 1860, when Napoleon III created a Ministry of the Colonies, this connection went on until Gambetta's Ministry of 1880, and led to a point of view that still colours much of French colonial activity. The association could be easily understood. All settlement was at that time in the coastal stage, and both the life of the colonies and communication with France depended on the Navy. Moreover, each colony, in so far as it was a settled *enclave* in a native country, came to be regarded as an isolated unit of France somewhat on a par with a French vessel at sea. Its preservation under the conditions was supposed to depend upon the maintenance of its *morale*, and everything was subordinated to the securing of discipline. Colonial methods were those that came naturally to the naval officers of last century, colonial officials were simply naval officers seconded for special service. It could almost be said that the colonies themselves were rather raw material for new strategic combinations than anything else. The position was that which pertained in Australia up to 1810, when naval martinets administered the colony as if it had been a gaol. But this method, although it did not last long in the British colonies, went on in France, almost unquestioned, until 1881.<sup>1</sup>

About that time a certain incongruity began to be felt about the situation. The nature of colonization in itself was changing. It was fitting enough to have the Navy control the colonies when they were either scattered islands or isolated factories on the African coast; but, when settlement penetrated inland, as it did during the scramble for Africa in the eighties of last century, and when the group of trading-posts developed into a society, this position no longer held. The colonial problem was emerging in its modern sense. The French had obtained Indo-China, and the problem there was economic rather than military. Indeed, it was the economic aspect that had come to dominate the situation everywhere. Ferry was "commercializing" colonization, and the colonies were looked upon as potential markets,—to be developed, now that the initial conquest was achieved. It was felt that the Navy could acquire the colonies for France but could not develop them, once they had been secured. It was recognized that colonization was a technical task and that overseas ventures were far more than a naval side-line. The colonies themselves, by the rapidity of their development, gave point to these arguments of Gambetta and Ferry, and, on all sides, there was an agreement that France had either to give up the colonial struggle or view it seriously. Ferry's fight decided that France should go on in the new direction: therefore Gambetta, in the zeal of his Grand Ministry

<sup>1</sup> Girault (1922), 2.1.203-205.

of 1881, entrusted the colonies to a Havre shipowner, Felix Faure, and called him an Under-Secretary of State.

The next thirteen years saw many experiments in colonial control. The colonial organization had what might be termed growing-pains, and was endeavouring to accommodate itself both to the changing position of the colonies and to the fluctuations of metropolitan opinion. France in these years was conquering an Empire, but did not know how to deal with it. She could not dispense with the Under-Secretary, yet did not know what to do with him and his department. Gambetta attached him to the Ministry of Commerce,—a concession to Ferry's interpretation of colonization as an economic function. But his successors were dubious on this point, and, when the Grand Ministry collapsed of its very grandeur, the colonies were handed over to a Director, Paul Dislère, the authority on colonial jurisprudence. This experiment scarcely survived the year (1882–1883), and then the Under-Secretariat was revived, but this time attached to the Navy.<sup>2</sup> It was a period of experimentation by a frankly empirical process: nobody pretended to know what was best, so the various alternatives were tried in succession. From 1886 onwards, however, the Under-Secretariat became permanently established, although it was by no means clear just where it fitted into the official edifice. Feeling seemed to indicate that it should be under both Ministries, but the question of divided responsibility forbade any practical application of this idea. All through the eighties there was vacillation on this question, and it was not until Eugene Etienne's memorable terms of office (1887–1888, 1889–1892) that any finality was reached. Etienne took a bold stand and declared that the direction of the colonies, to be effective, should have two distinct features. It was to be independent, and its functions were to be primarily economic.<sup>3</sup> He thus fought the old naval tradition tooth and nail, declaring that the former association, as applied to the conditions of the New Africa, could only mean stagnation.

The colonial service, therefore, gradually became independent. The Under-Secretary's functions were enlarged by the cession of certain affairs from the Naval Ministry, and he acquired the power of signing decrees independently of the Minister of Commerce, even after his department was again attached to that Ministry in 1889. With this definition the administration of the colonies was almost independent. Indeed, the last few Under-Secretaries were Ministers in everything but name, and, as such, Etienne in particular, left the impress of their personalities on

<sup>2</sup> For a good history see Regismanset (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 34 *et seq.*, or E. Petit, *Organisation des Colonies françaises* (1894), Vol. I, p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. in *Journal Officiel*, *Déps.*, 2/12/91.

colonial organization. The transformation of the French colonial Empire at this date allowed of no other solution, and it was only the law of the constitution that forbade a complete independence. The colonies were developing so rapidly that they were forcing recognition for themselves and for the body that dealt with their affairs: so that the actual inception of a Ministry of the Colonies was due quite as much to the facts of colonial growth as to the vigorous personality of Eugene Etienne. When both of these forces came into operation simultaneously, the actual achievement was only a matter of time.

By 1894 the goal was obvious. The new international importance of Africa had made colonization an important part of any nation's life. Colonies had become assets instead of costly drolleries of great nations. They were important diplomatically; their absence was taken to mean weakness; and they were seen to have a distinct economic value, especially when words like rubber and oil and cotton came to assume a new meaning in world economics. That is, the prestige of the colonies was becoming enhanced. At the same time, their management was becoming more and more specialized. This meant that colonial questions could no longer be relegated to any Minister who would take them and sign the necessary decrees. The position had changed, and could no longer be adequately met by an irresponsible Under-Secretary and a Minister whose primary work lay in some other field. There had to be a Minister who could organize a department of specialists and be responsible for them in Parliament, especially when world-peace came to depend on such matters as the Ubangui-Nile basin. Spain, Holland, and Great Britain already had such a Ministry, and France had a more important empire than two of these. Lastly, just at this moment, the leading French possessions (Indo-China, West Africa, the Congo, and Madagascar) were all demanding permanent organization. A law of March 20, 1894, therefore set up a Ministry of the Colonies.<sup>4</sup>

A curious detail may be noticed in connection with this act. Up to that time a simple Presidential decree had been deemed sufficient for the institution of any new Ministry. Indeed, this was the first occasion in French history when a Ministry had been created by a law. The reason for the unusual procedure in this instance was said to be the novel nature of the issue and the many interpretations that could be given to the new step. Moreover, opinion was so divided that the Cabinet would not move without the consent of Parliament. Previous proposals with this idea in view had been rejected in 1887 and 1892,<sup>5</sup> and there was considerable opposition to the move, both on the part of those who favoured and those

<sup>4</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 21/3/94. For report on organization see *Journal Officiel*, 5/5/94.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 11/3/92.

who opposed the colonial cause. The latter were naturally arrayed in full force against any proposition that seemed to confer a new dignity on the colonies, and many moderates opposed the creation of a new Ministry on principle, lest it should complicate an already intricate administrative machinery. Some, too, thought that the colonies were not sufficiently important for this new status, or that, even if they were, the institution of a Ministry would make control more minute and ponderous. Curiously enough, the most strenuous opposition came from the colonial representatives themselves. They saw in the proposal a measure of centralization, an undue emphasis on Paris, and thus an attack on the growing autonomy of the colonies.

But, over and against this more or less sectional opposition, stood the reasons in favour of a Ministry. The colonies had their new importance, deny it who would : the economic nature of their problems demanded specialists : their very size made a separate control absolutely necessary : other Powers under similar circumstances had Colonial Offices : and, perhaps the most cogent argument of all, the existing machinery had broken down. The Ministry in 1892 had shelved the issue on the ground that it was not of immediate urgency : moreover, they reasoned, looking facts in the face, there was already a Ministry in fact, if not in name. But, at this juncture, the old weakness of irresponsibility again cropped up. It had been pointed out by jurists that the Under-Secretary for the Colonies had power without responsibility, and that the Minister to whom he was attached for the time being, whether of the Navy or Commerce, could not be held responsible for acts over which he had no effective control. The Under-Secretary was in reality a floating *enclave* in the administrative world, immune from the customary check of responsibility to Parliament for misdeed or ill-advised policy. And this was not a mere theoretical possibility : certain acts of the Council of State at that moment showed that it was a pressing practical question.<sup>6</sup> The Council refused to ratify certain acts of Under-Secretary Lebon, who at once resigned and left the colonies without any central administration at all. The Council repeated the old quip about power without responsibility, Lebon retorted that under the conditions he had neither power nor responsibility. An issue was thus forced, and the Casimir-Perier Ministry reintroduced the law creating a Ministry of the Colonies, this time placing it in the category of urgent legislation.

It passed both Houses in three days, the Senate having a special *séance* on Monday, March 19, 1894, to expedite its passage.<sup>7</sup> The upper House was not as much in its favour as the Deputies had been,

<sup>6</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Senate, 21/6/92 (Trarieux interpellation).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Depts., 18/3/94, Senate, 20/3/94. Senate, 14/5/93 (Delcassé).

because there the colonial representatives were in greater force, and many of the Senators favoured the conservative policy of leaving the colonies with the Navy. But the choice before them was rather a different one. As interpreted to them, it was not so much a choice between a separate Ministry and a department attached to the Navy, as a vote on colonial policy as such. If the Senate had rejected the proposal, that would have been equivalent to abandoning the colonial conquests of the previous decade, because it was realized that the existing machinery was incapable of organizing the new colonies; whereas, on the other hand, their immediate endorsement of the project meant the maintenance and extension of the forward policy overseas. This was the most significant vote on colonial policy since the proposal to retain Tonkin in 1885, and France for the second time, this time decisively, chose for the colonies. The law of March 20, 1894, was thus far more than the consummation of an administrative development that had been taking place since 1881: it was the confirmation of the New Empire, and the decision to develop that empire to the utmost.

No sooner was this victory achieved, however, than other problems arose. There was now a Ministry of the Colonies,—a somewhat unsought Ministry, it is true, but still a Ministry of full status: but the question was,—over what regions had the Minister any power? Algeria clearly stood outside his ken, because, if it was not France, it was still not a colony. Its hundred thousand French settlers made it a prolongation of France,—a Corsica rather than a West Africa. So that it remained under the Ministry of the Interior,—a decision that was taken to confirm the privileged status of Algeria and that was practically unquestioned. Then arose the question of the protectorates. France clearly did not own these lands, and they were in some degree distinct States. Their problems could fairly be called more than national and yet less than international, they were both colonial and diplomatic. Therefore, the protectorates were handed over to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.\* Tunisia and later Morocco were thus disposed of, and there arose the anomalous position of having Africa Minor divided into three portions and distributed amongst two Ministries, neither of them the Ministry of the Colonies! To be logical, Annam and Tonkin, also being protectorates, should have gone to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but these were so much incorporated in Indo-China as a whole and Cochin-China was so obviously a completely French possession that a decree of 1887 took them from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and handed them over to the Under-Secretary for the Colonies. This was obviously

\* See explanation in Mérignhac, *Traité de Droit Public International* (1905), Vol. I, p. 211.



anomalous, and so too was the placing of the mandated territories (Togo and Cameroon) under the Minister of the Colonies, because these were even more international in character than the protectorates. The position really amounts to a grouping under the Minister of the Colonies of all the overseas possessions except the North African seaboard. Yet the logical solution of a division into two clear groups is rejected, because of the failure to unite Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia under one control.

It is in this latter direction that criticism has been tending for some time. There is practically no move to attach the three North African States to the colonial Ministry, nor has there ever been one.<sup>9</sup> They stand apart from the rest of the French Empire, from which they are differentiated by their geographical position and the nature of their problems. The French argue that they are Mediterranean rather than African ("it should never be forgotten," says Girault, "that Africa Minor belongs much more to the Mediterranean world than to the African"). But, while there is some point to this argument, it would seem to be over-stressed. It is argued, too, that France's Moslem problem is concentrated in these regions, but this neglects the Islamised negroes of Central Africa. Even admitting the force of the contention that the Barbary States constitute a solid *bloc* apart from the other colonies, however, the question arises as to why they are not united under a single department. If they are separated from the rest, because of their distinctness and the similarity of their problems, why are they divided amongst themselves? The argument that they were acquired at different times and that one is a possession and two only protectorates loses its point, because of opposing practices elsewhere,—in Indo-China, for example. And the middle cannot in the main have problems distinct from the two extremities. Indeed, the very arguments that justify the separation of North Africa from the rest of the colonies condemn the present division under two Ministries. They are kept apart from the rest of the Empire because of peculiar local interests: the existence of those interests equally demands a single control—if not the "Ministry of North Africa" that is so much sought after, at least a single Under-Secretariat.<sup>10</sup> Guizot had foreseen this development, Ferry hoped for it, and the organic reformers of the conference-period around 1905 demanded it in no uncertain terms. For a time, the issue was obscured by Messimy's insistence on "a Ministry of Africa and the Colonies" (a title that is as cumbrous as it is a misnomer),<sup>11</sup> but, after the acquisition

<sup>9</sup> See, however, Perreau-Pradier in *Colonies et Marine*, May 31, 1920, p. 265.

<sup>10</sup> Girault, "Le ministère de l'Afrique du Nord," in *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, Jan. 1918.

<sup>11</sup> Messimy in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 25/3/14; compare Besson in *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, Dec. 1917.

of Morocco, opinion veered back to the lesser idea of a "North African Ministry." Strengthened during the war-years, this trend is at present in the ascendant. According to *L'Afrique Française*, the Conservative organ of the colonial party, the direction of future changes is fairly certain.<sup>12</sup> There will be a kind of department for North Africa, and special codes of law will apply there. The three provinces will be united for some purposes, something on the model of the Union of South Africa, but each will preserve its individuality. There will thus be a logical division within the French Empire. The three Mauretaniae will be grouped together, as every argument urges, and over against them, will be the overseas colonies proper.<sup>13</sup>

Whether this North African department will be under the Minister of Colonies or either of the two Ministries at present concerned, or whether it will be a new Ministry in itself, depends on the vagaries of French politics. It would appear, however, that the best solution would be to raise the prestige of the Minister of the Colonies and place him over two co-equal departments,—one dealing with Africa Minor, the other with the remaining colonies. This is the solution Great Britain has adopted for a somewhat similar difficulty. The Minister of the Colonies supervises both the Dominions and the Crown Colonies, though there are separate departments for each.

But the stumbling-blocks to unity in the French case are the opposition of the French residents in Algeria and the peculiar status of Tunisia and Morocco. The French in Algeria value their special position and resent any attempt to connect them with the other colonies,—the black or yellow regions of France. Rejoicing in their special status, they interpret any changes as retrogression to a stage which they have long left. On the other hand, the duplication and conflicting policies involved in the division between two unconnected Ministries and in the separation from other colonial matters are so obvious that such sectional opposition as that of the French Algerians should count for little. The trouble is not that the faults of the present situation are unrecognized, not that the solution is obscure, but solely that the constant ebb and flow amongst the many parties in French politics daunts any party from tackling this thorny question. A solution, far from helping the party concerned, would provide just such an issue as would at once rally all of its opponents. Colonial organization has suffered for decades, because it provides an ideal *casus belli* in Parliament. All stand to lose by touching it, and none

<sup>12</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, March, 1922, p. 132.

<sup>13</sup> Pamphlets by F. Bernard, *L'Unification de l'Afrique du Nord* (1919), or article by Ordinaire, "Constitutions Africaines," in *Colonies et Marine*, March-April, 1920, p. 176 et seq.

to gain ; and heretofore no party or *bloc* has seen fit to interfere. The matter is urgent but not vital : the position is admittedly bad, but still the colonies survive ! A continued drift is the easiest way out of the dilemma, and so the years pass. A Messimy or a Viollette may stir up the embers from time to time, a Hubert may cause interpellations on colonial matters, but such individuals pass to some administrative post, and the Senate or Deputies thankfully let the matter drop. Experts like Regismanset or Girault draw up elaborate schemes, only for them to be tabled or relegated to the archives : and still officials in the Ministries of the Colonies, the Interior, and Foreign Affairs, investigate precisely similar problems. Even Sarraut, root-and-branch reformer though he was, could do no more than point in general terms to the abstract desirability of a change, and his very lack of detailed proposals seemed to damn the project as not immediately important. "*Ça n'est pas admirable,*" runs the French argument, "*mais ça va !*" The present arrangement works, and it might be worse. Moreover, why bother about rearranging the French Empire in a perfectly logical manner ? If that were the criterion, practically the whole of the colonial structure would have to be torn down ! The question is thus left to colonial conferences and legal periodicals, and every one else is pleased that it is not a matter of politics. If Rousseau represented one side of French life, so did Tartarin, or, better still, Bernard Zimmer's Bava ! And did not the Senate's attitude towards the *mise en valeur* project in 1919 or the Syrian question in 1920 exactly reflect these varied influences ?

As a result of this confusion, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia remain outside the scope of the Colonial Minister. They are not termed colonies, they do not usually come within colonial statistics, Sarraut did not include them in his scheme for a *mise en valeur* of the Empire. A colonial area twice as large as France and containing more than a fifth of the French overseas subjects is completely separated from colonial control. How France collects colonial statistics under these conditions, or how a Moslem policy is decided upon, or a colonial budget drawn up is not clear : but certainly not in the most expeditious manner.

Those services which still remain under the Minister of Colonies have an elaborate organization. As usual, the past has known much variation, because two diametrically opposed systems were possible. Services could be divided either geographically or according to their nature. At first, for example, in the Ministerial organization of May, 1896, the former principle was accepted, and the Ministry was divided into departments, each of which dealt with all the problems of a given colony. But general principles could not be managed in this fashion, nor could a uniformity of policy be secured. Details tended to triumph over principles, and

the anticipated advantage of having the affairs, say, of Madagascar, dealt with by experts who really knew Madagascar, did not eventuate. The system, instead of meaning localized knowledge, meant a narrow parochialism. This flaw became the more obvious when the immensity of the colonial problem made a uniformity of policy the more necessary. Strategy had become more important than tactics, and principles than details.

The new organization, that achieved by the Law of Finances in July, 1920,<sup>14</sup> therefore adopted the second principle as the basis of future organization. Hereafter, colonial matters were to be dealt with according to their nature and not the locality in which they happened to be. Land-matters in Tonkin and Tahiti were to be determined by one agency, as it was felt that they could be better managed by one trained official than by encyclopædic persons who would undertake to pronounce on each and every problem that might arise in a given colony. A more technical and specialized viewpoint, in fact, a comparative method of approach, was thus adopted. What was equally to the point, another step was taken in the direction of centralizing colonial matters. All colonial affairs were matters for Paris to decide, and the new system, by discounting the local groupings of the old, placed a new emphasis on the *general* nature of colonial problems. A blow was given, at least implicitly, to colonial individuality; and it was definitely in the minds of the reformers to minimize any significance that may have been attached to the old method of considering each colony as an entity in itself. The change of 1920 was far from haphazard. It was clearly a part of the post-war re-orientation of French colonial methods. It was a measure of efficiency, of specialization, of centralization, and largely designed to make the schemes of an imperial *mise en valeur* more effective. It was made clear to French colonies that they were primarily raw materials for the development of a national policy, and only secondarily entities in themselves. Hence the deprecation of any regional solution of their problem.

At present, therefore, the Ministry of the Colonies is divided into nine departments,—the Minister's own general department and secretariat, and then individual services for political matters, economic matters, military matters, general control, personnel, public works, health and the mercantile marine. Each of these divisions considers its own problems in every colony, the only vestige of the old system being in the political branch, where the *bureaux*, so familiar in French colonial history, are arranged so that they consider the problems of separate groups of colonies as entities. But the general rule is to group problems

<sup>14</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 15/8/20, or Messimy, *Notre Œuvre Coloniale* (1910), pp. 18-19.

according to their nature and not according to their geographical provenance.

It is not suggested that this system is free from defects. Geographical division did at least correlate the problems of any particular group and consider outside local forces: but the new system tends to isolate a given problem from its given context and neglect the complex of interests which are quite as important factors in the situation as the consideration of how similar problems are solved elsewhere. The present system would rather rob problems of their individuality, so to speak, and induces a mechanical point of view. But, as a Paris-trained official dealing with Madagascar alone would probably be as mechanical as his fellow considering only land-legislation in all the colonies, this argument loses a good deal of its practical force. The most obvious advantage of the new system remains the opportunity it gives for a uniform and continuous policy, both of which features were hampered under the earlier system.

Apart from its limitation to certain colonies, the organization of the Ministry of the Colonies is admittedly unsatisfactory. Much of the criticism is levelled at the hold of the permanent officials. The French colonial Ministry is as much an oligarchical body as was the British under Sir James Stephen, that Permanent Under-Secretary of State who, between 1836 and 1847, was the subject of endless attack as "Mr. Mother-Country" or "Over-Secretary Stephen." The Ministry in the Rue Oudinot reduces itself to the permanent *bureaux*, with more or less surface concessions to the idiosyncrasies of the politician or party in power for the moment. The permanent officials are everything, the Minister, unless of an outstanding personality, a subsidiary, both to the other Ministers and to his own officials.

"There have been so many quarrels over centralization and decentralization that, in the end, the Minister of the Colonies is only left with a pen to sign the more or less useless papers of a meticulous and effete bureaucracy. Is the Minister then a controlling agency? Is he an agent of direction? Is he any other thing? Not at all. In fact, he is thirteenth at the Council of Ministers: in his room at the Rue Oudinot, he is invariably an amiable and courteous colleague who cannot take the personal and immediate decisions that he should be able to do, because he is in the hands of the neighbouring Departments."<sup>16</sup>

Thus limited, and with the political head more a communicating-agent with such Ministries as that of Finance than anything else, the Colonial Department pursues its grinding way,—what the opposition rejoices to call "*administrative tracasserie*,"—irrespective of political

<sup>16</sup> See Chap. III, note 20. For the position of the Minister, see Bluyssen, "*Le Rôle et les Pouvoirs du Ministère des Colonies*," in *Colonies et Marine*, Oct. 1920, pp. 573-585—an important article.

changes. Most of the ordinary affairs in colonial life are determined by the dictates of the permanent officers in Paris: add to this the lack of self-government in the colonies, and it will be obvious why France is a century behind England in this regard. In fact, the criticisms that Roebuck and Hume and Wakefield hurled at the British Colonial Office in the thirties of last century could be applied almost verbatim to the Rue Oudinot to-day.

This position is inevitable as long as the theory of administrative centralization remains fashionable, and it has resisted most attacks up to the present. Ever since 1894 there has been a continual duel between the two theories of centralization and devolution of powers, but the issue was largely foregone. The reformers submitted various schemes of reform, but always in a half-hearted manner, because they realized that the fortifications they were planning to take by assault were practically impregnable, French administrative life being what it is. The Ministry was obviously attempting too much with an inadequate organization, they said. It wanted to keep every detail of colonial administration under its control, even after the institution of the Governments-General. Even granting the wisdom of this, a smoothly running organization was necessary: yet, as Messimy reported in his budget-speech of 1910, the Ministry, in its existing form, was only "a confused group of services which has nothing in common with what a great State administration should be."<sup>16</sup>

To improve this situation, two kinds of reforms were put forward, —the first to define and limit the functions of the Ministry, and the second to secure a more efficient exercise of its powers. The first of these was the more urgent, because the congestion of affairs was so great that even vital matters were delayed. To minimize this, Milliès-Lacroix, the Minister of Colonies at the close of 1907, proposed to take away purely local services from the central Ministry and hand them over to an Agency-General of the Colonies.<sup>17</sup> That would leave the Ministry free to handle questions of general policy and enable it to be a directing and co-ordinating agency, instead of actually checking administrative details. But Doumer, the budget-reporter of that year, although he had served in Indo-China and should have been better informed, declared that there was no need for reorganization: and it is asserted that the other members of the Budget Commission either could not understand the proposals or ignored them, the result being that they were shelved. Three years later, Messimy, who had taken up the mantle of Milliès-Lacroix, went even further and demanded, not one, but several Agencies-General, one for each group of

<sup>16</sup> Messimy in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 5/4/11, 28/5/11.

<sup>17</sup> *Quinzaine Coloniale*, 25/7/07, p. 81.

colonies.<sup>18</sup> In effect, he wanted to set up an executive council for each geographical group, sitting in Paris and in general supervising the affairs of that group in the same way as the Ministry had hitherto done. De Lanessan, the reformer of a quarter of a century before, had asserted that, without such a geographical grouping, the French Empire could know neither meaning nor efficiency: and now, Messimy was carrying this idea out by arranging for an Agency-General as a complement for every Government-General. A Government-General on the spot and an Agency-General in Paris with the Ministry co-ordinating all activities,—that was his proposed system: and, of course, his Agencies were not to be the trade-*bureaux* that were afterwards established, but Government departments controlling administration.

Messimy wanted decentralization above all things. In a report of May, 1911, for instance, he said specifically that the Ministry of the Colonies had to be different from every other Ministry, because all traces of the customary French centralization had to be eradicated.<sup>19</sup> A decree of the same month established his ideas in practice, and, for a time, the Ministry was divided into certain general sections, with extra departments for each of four groups of colonies.<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately, the scheme was never given a chance, because Messimy's successor held opposite views and suppressed the new organization. Then came the war and the unquestioned triumph of the principle of centralization,—a principle that was accepted entirely in the above-mentioned reorganization of 1920, which divided the Ministry's functions from the point of view of Paris and sounded the death-knell of the system of decentralization. The implications of the local budgets of 1900, of the Governments-General, and of the reforms of 1911 were thus all swept aside: and the colonial Ministry remains as centralized and as rigid as any other French Ministry. Messimy's pleas for an elastic control and for the entry of local influences remain, it is true, for does not a beneficent Government make the pages of the *Journal Officiel* available to good citizens at the Imprimerie Nationale? They can see for themselves that such wondrous plans were actually proposed, but, for purposes of practical policy, the schemes of 1911 are as ineffective as if they had never been made.

The French Ministry of Colonies is therefore the mouthpiece of central interests. It has no function of linking the interests of both colony and mother-country: it speaks for Paris. Nor is it concerned only with questions of general policy: it administers and governs as well as decides policy. It is the apex of the colonial administrative

<sup>18</sup> Messimy, *Notre Œuvre Coloniale* (1910), p. 398.

<sup>19</sup> In *Journal Officiel*, *Déps.*, 28/5/11.

<sup>20</sup> *Décrets* of 20, 26/5/11.

structure—and not in the sense of confirming what has already been achieved so much as in deciding and executing details of government. It has the same relation to the colonies that the Ministry of the Interior has to the cantons and *arrondissements* of mainland France, and this relationship even extends to groups of colonies possessing a Government-General. The word *bureaux* is not a mere rhetorical flourish in describing the French colonial system: it is the colonial system. The *bureaux* are all-powerful, and, save for Parliament (or rather, the permanent Commissions which dominate Parliament in the French political world), unchecked: <sup>21</sup> and every detail of colonial existence comes within their ken. They are the central fact in French colonial life, for they determine and execute the policy, which indeed is inconceivable without them.<sup>22</sup>

## II. The Conseil Supérieur des Colonies

The Ministry is aided by a number of outside agencies, of which the most grandiose, if not the most important, is the *Conseil Supérieur des Colonies*,—the Upper Colonial Council. Just after the Under-Secretariat of State for the Colonies was created, a decree of October 19, 1883, set up this Council as a kind of advisory assembly for all colonial matters. The aim was to be able to obtain a symposium from experts on any given question. Gambetta had just insisted on the need for an effective organization of the colonies, and Ferry was showing how technical a problem colonial administration was. Colonial questions could not be decided on general principles: the need was for an expert presentation of facts and a sifting of authoritative opinion. A clearing-house of colonial administration was needed,—some means whereby the joint colonial *Zeitgeist* of any moment could be made available to Parliament or to the administrative officials in Paris. Colonization was becoming more economic, and it was but fitting, therefore, that the determination of policy should be scientific rather than haphazard. The result of this changed attitude was the *Conseil Supérieur*.<sup>23</sup> Everything went well for about three years. The body met frequently, and proffered much information and advice. Then it suddenly ceased to function for over thirty years. So moribund was it that it seemed fitting at one time to include dead men in its list of members!

The reasons for this setback were many and obvious. The Council was too large and cumbrous, in the first place. It included 146 members, and effective action, even for non-controversial matters, is practically

<sup>21</sup> Article by Bluysen, "Le Rôle et les Pouvoirs du Ministère des Colonies," *op. cit.*, p. 583.

<sup>22</sup> Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, pp. 236-240.

<sup>23</sup> Dislère, *Traité de Législation Coloniale* (1906 edition), Vol. I, p. 254.



impossible with such numbers. By the nature of things, too, the experts who comprised it would largely be retired men whom it would be difficult to gather together,—a difficulty that was still more obvious in the case of representatives from the colonies. Then again, even if the body could work rapidly and effectively, its utility lay chiefly in the formative stage of colonial history. As the organization of the colonies proceeded, there would be other, and more official, means of securing information and advice. Permanent officials would be in a better position than outsiders to effect these services, and a *bureau* would be quicker and more efficient than grinding out advice from this unwieldy Parliament of experts. They were damned by their number, and, human nature being what it is, probably by their dogmatism and preconceived ideas.

The Council was thus rendered anomalous, or, at least, could serve only in a different capacity from that anticipated in 1883. The departments of the Ministry of the Colonies could do most of its work after 1894, and Parliamentary Commissions, like the famous Algerian Commission of 1892, could investigate special questions. Moreover, the institution of the various Governments-General after 1895 placed more matters under local control and, in particular, those on which the Parisian officials would be in most need of local knowledge. Each Government-General tended to become a State within a State. The Governor-General and his Council attended to many details which would otherwise have gone to the Ministry, and, in many cases, Paris slipped into a position of ratifying rather than deciding. This was aided by the movement in favour of decentralization in the years immediately preceding the war of 1914 and by the implicit recognition that the colonies were obtaining more individuality: and each step away from Paris meant an added reason why the old *Conseil Supérieur* should not be revived.

The events of the war, however, changed all this. The colonial question suddenly assumed a new importance, and outgrew the local colonies. France's destiny came to be linked up with, and in part to depend on, colonial development. The colonies were by no means the least important factor in the great economic problem that confronted a war-broken France, and, in the recuperation, the primal need was for the most effective utilization of all resources. This meant that the colonies had to work as a whole, that the development of one group had to fit in with that of others, and, above all, that there had to be a uniform policy. In a word the conditions of 1883 found themselves largely duplicated. There had to be a more effective survey of colonial problems, a finer focusing of expert contributions in Paris, and a more immediate consultation of colonial representatives. All three of these, it was held, could be secured by infusing new vitality into the old *Conseil Supérieur*.

It had aided in the original stage, and, if it had fallen into disuse during the period of administrative organization, it could once more perform functions now that the time had come for France to reap the rewards of her colonial sacrifices. The Council could play a large part in systematizing the harvest, and incidentally, its revival would do much to counteract the growing movements of colonial discontent. There were thus the two sets of ideas behind its revival. It could help in the new *mise en valeur* of the Empire, and it could play the part the Imperial Conference played in the British Empire.

This was made quite clear in the *exposé des motifs* that accompanied the proposals of 1920 to reconstitute the Council.<sup>24</sup> Sarraut, in introducing the new decree, said definitely that there was a need of greater continuity in colonial policy, especially on the economic side, and an equally obvious need for a permanent contact between metropolitan thought and colonial life. The two motives were mixed: the change was at once a gesture in the direction of consulting the colonies and a measure for securing efficiency.

Under the decree of September 28, 1920, therefore, the *Conseil Supérieur* became a real advisory Parliament of experts. As now constituted, it consists of three parts, which meet separately as well as in a general forum. The first section, the *Haut Conseil Colonial*, is to advise on matters concerning the general development and administration of the colonies, and especially on native policy. It consists of all ex-Ministers of the Colonies, all ex-Governors-General, and representatives from the Foreign, War and Naval Ministeries. It is entirely a body of experienced officials and does not pretend to consult colonial opinion. It might be called the political council or inner Cabinet, created to discuss the problems of wider policy. It is practically the nerve-centre of the organism, and the functions of the other parts are more detailed. The second section, the Colonial Economic Council (*Conseil Economique des Colonies*), is, as the name implies, a body limited to economic functions. It advises on the exploitation and general commerce of the colonies, and in particular on the interactions between the industrial life of France and the colonies. Its composition is far wider than that of the political section, and is largely unofficial. All the colonial representatives in Parliament belong to it *ex officio*: the fourteen delegates elected to the *Conseil Supérieur* by the colonies sit here: and, in addition, any number of experts may be added. It is divided into seven sections, each dealing with a special phase of economic life in the colonies, and any number of these sectional groups may meet in common. This will be the body which will consider the numerous details of colonial development, and it may

<sup>24</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 30/9/20, p. 1445 *et seq.*

safely be said that herein will lie the chief practical utility of the new *Conseil Supérieur*. The third section of the *Conseil* is more specialized, but performs a very definite function. It is the Council of Colonial Legislation and is to be consulted regarding all legislative or financial reforms which affect the colonies. It consists of four high officials, but the representatives of the colony concerned are admitted when a matter relating to one colony is being dealt with.

To all three sections alike, other officials or native representatives may be called. Indeed, the membership of each section may be termed fluid, consisting of a more or less permanent nucleus around which temporary members gather for the discussion of any special question. As is usual in French colonization, metropolitan interests are carefully safeguarded. The bulk of the members of the various sections are officials, or, by reason of the method of nomination, favourable to the official view-point. The only elective element consists of the colonial representatives in Parliament and the *Conseil* itself, and they are insignificant in number and chosen only by the French citizens in the colonies. They are essentially minority representatives. A curious point in connection with the fourteen delegates elected by the colonies to the *Conseil Supérieur* is that officials are excluded, presumably with the idea of giving articulation to the wider colonial interests.

The reorganization of the *Conseil* was completed by a decree of October 6, 1925, which arranged for an annual plenary session of its sections.<sup>25</sup> Their duty at this joint meeting was to examine the questions that had been discussed by the Economic or Legislative Councils. This step did something to approximate the *Conseil Supérieur* to the British Imperial Conference, although, on the whole, there is little similarity between the two bodies. Both have the same aims, but there the resemblance ends. The fundamental distinction is that the French body is of wider composition and less authority. In practice, it comes to mean the predominance of Paris officials, and yet the highest officials concerned, the Minister and Under-Secretary, for instance, do not enter it. The British body, to the contrary, has far more colonial officials, yet the most important British statesmen join too. The *Conseil Supérieur* has a majority of home officials, and yet they do not speak authoritatively, so far as the determination of policy is concerned. The Imperial Conference, however, consists of the colonial politicians in office for the time being, and is thus representative and responsible. Its members shape policy, the French body only influences it indirectly. The resolutions of the one are simply resolutions, those of the other find expression in results. By inference, this means that the French body tends to discuss

<sup>25</sup> E. Antonelli, *Manuel de Législation Coloniale* (1926), p. 75.

details, while the general policies are determined by the *bureaux* and politicians: whereas the British Conference, ignoring details, discusses general questions of Imperial policy. The Imperial Conference is for a different kind of consultation and works differently. If the colonial governors actually in office were called to Paris, if they were joined by the heads of the Ministries dealing with colonial matters and if a few of the representatives and official specialists of the *Conseil Supérieur* were added, there might be a body somewhat resembling the British Imperial Conference. They might then discuss the matters dealt with in the plenary session of the present *Conseil* and deal with them more authoritatively. They could thus shape policy instead of merely proffering advice, and be a crucial body instead of a more or less ornamental appendage.<sup>26</sup> The cumbrous form of the *Conseil Supérieur*, even with its new constitution, predestines it to a comparative mediocrity: and its divorce both from the real heads of the colonial world in Paris and from the major administrators in the colonies makes it unimportant. It is interesting, but it lacks vitality and, after all, remains a ponderous excrescence growing outside the general colonial body, instead of having a definite rôle inside it. What is needed is a small executive council composed of officials whose decisions can be accepted and small enough to work efficiently. Without these two characteristics, no colonial conference can be really effective, especially in the present inchoate form of the French Empire.

There is thus much ground for the complaint of reformers that France has no real councils for colonial matters. Lucien Hubert's criticism that the *Conseil Supérieur* was "defunct before having lived" seems justified,<sup>27</sup> in view of previous experience with such ponderous councils out of touch with realities: and there is no regional council like the Council of India. If such councils are out of the question for all of the colonies, there is no reason why there may not be, for instance, a real advisory council for the three States of North Africa. Indeed, one might go further, and claim powers of direction for such a Council, in addition to purely advisory functions. This does not mean to suggest that details of administration should come before such a body: the French system already provides, and more than provides, for such details. What is needed is, as Hubert says, a regulator to accelerate the slow march of the heavy machine of the Rue Oudinot—a body to keep its finger on the pulse of colonial matters and suggest stimulants. There could easily be one of these directing Councils for North Africa, one

<sup>26</sup> *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National, 1889-1890, Vol. I, pp. 34-38*, for the four functions such a Council might exercise.

<sup>27</sup> L. Hubert, *Une Politique Coloniale* (1918), pp. 30-31.

for the negro colonies of Africa, one for Indo-China, and one for the *anciens colonies* and the scattered possessions. They would be regional councils with authority to act and too important to have their suggestions merely pigeon-holed. The demand is for a living assembly really directing the affairs of each colony,—not, be it noted, for a representative body, but for a decentralizing official body, with perhaps a little colonial representation. This is quite a different matter from the constitutional development of the colonies themselves: the issue here is for effective direction and administration.

It might almost be asserted that there is no choice in the matter. Present French policy is in the direction of curtailing the autonomy of the Governors-General: the decision of December, 1926, in connection with Indo-China, hitherto the most independent of the Governments-General, clearly exemplifies this trend of the whole of the post-war colonial policy of France: and the ban on the political development of councils within the colonies has been so repeatedly affirmed as to admit of no cavil. With colonial assemblies thus throttled and colonial officials limited in their activities, there is no link evolving between France and the colonies. The gap is there beyond dispute and will become the more serious as the colonies develop. The *bureaux*, already overburdened and unadaptable, cannot fill it: the *Conseil Supérieur* is doomed to petty matters by its very composition: permanent or semi-permanent Commissions have not developed in France as they have in Great Britain: and there seems no solution beyond such regional Councils sitting in Paris.

At one time, during the feverish series of councils from 1905 onwards, it seemed as if non-official or semi-official councils were emerging to prove the possibility of development in geographical groups<sup>28</sup>; but nothing came of the experiment, except a series of valuable reports and a realization that such regional councils could conceivably be evolved if the inclination were present. But there seemed no immediate need for them, and many arguments were adduced against them. For instance, it was asserted that the embryonic financial bodies of the colonies,—the *Délégations Financières* of Algeria, the *Conférence Consultative* of Tunisia, and the *Conseils Supérieurs* of the other colonies,—served this function: but, when limits were placed on their development and they were forbidden to change with the changing circumstances, this assertion lost all its point. Moreover, the need was not for an advisory or checking body under the local officials, but for a directing agency *over* them. Clearly, there is no existing body that meets or that can expand so that it will

<sup>28</sup> See previously quoted reports of Colonial Congress of Marseilles (1906), Bordeaux (1907), the Old Colonies (1909), North Africa (1909), East Africa (1912), etc.

meet, the demands of the post-war French Empire, and it is idle to dream of any single Council that can deal with the problems of so diverse an Empire. The solution must be along the line of regional *blocs*, with executive councils for each. There are, it is true, various committees functioning at present, for such matters as colonial banks, social legislation, and native affairs; but these are limited in scope and uncertain in action. The demand is for generalized Commissions on a geographical basis. Until they come, the French colonial structure will remain top-heavy,—with an undue stress on the Paris officials and a retarded colonial development, and with no effective link between Paris and the colonies.

In addition to such regional councils, there is also room for a Colonial Conference on the English model. A start was made in this direction in 1917. In June of that year, André Maginot, the Minister of the Colonies in the Ribot Cabinet, convened a gathering something on the lines of the British Imperial Conference. Though the meeting was nominally to commence a systematic inventory of the French colonies, preliminary to the general *mise en valeur* scheme, Maginot stated definitely that his aims were far wider. His real object, he said in his opening speech, was “to end that lack of co-ordination which has too long been evident in the determination of our colonial policy.” The Council went to work at once, and drew up a valuable series of economic *cahiers* for the various colonies. So successful were they in collecting data and formulating conclusions that Maginot, by a decree of August, 1917, created an “Executive Commission,” presided over by Senator Bérenger, to give practical expression to their views. But, unfortunately, the Ribot Cabinet fell in the next month, and the scheme was soon forgotten. Yet it had shown what could be done, even under unfavourable conditions.<sup>20</sup>

The idea went on, however, and Hubert and the other constructive reformers urged the establishment of an Imperial Council to discuss the general problems of the Empire. It was to follow the model of the Imperial Conference of Great Britain, but, taking into account the peculiar conditions of the French Empire, such a body would perhaps be more akin to the Imperial War Cabinet of Great Britain, because it would have the power to come to decisions and act upon them, just as the Imperial War Cabinet did, without the need of consulting the colonies. The fact that the French colonies have not any dominion status or responsible government as yet allows such an Imperial body to fuse the characteristics of the Imperial War Cabinet and the ordinary Imperial Conference, and avoids those thorny questions of responsibility that made

<sup>20</sup> An incomplete *Compte Rendu* was published of this Conference. A good account is in *Regismanset* (1923), *op. cit.*, Vol. II.

the continuance of the Imperial War Cabinet impossible under ordinary peace conditions. The French body would probably commence by being mainly advisory; and conditions, depending largely on its *personnel*, would determine the degree to which it would become an arbiter of policy or an executive agency. The scope for development in either direction is there, and, even in the more limited form, it would be possible to perform valuable service. Fully developed, such a body would act both in a permanent and a moderating form. It might minimize the disruptive influence exerted on colonial matters by the chameleon politics of France, and at the same time prevent that rigidity and official paralysis which a too great reliance on the *bureaux* has always secured in the past. France stands to gain in every way by the innovation and at the worst, if such an Imperial Council were stillborn, it could be put aside like the old *Conseil Supérieur*,—a monument to the ingenuity of the jurists and a reminder that the word *tâlonnement* is the closest rival of *tracasserie* in being the most used in French colonial annals.

### III. Inspection and Control

If France has no effective Councils to link the colonies with the mother-country, she has another curious link,—one peculiarly French and developed far more than in the case of any other Power. This is the institution known as "*l'Inspection des Colonies*,"<sup>30</sup>—a permanent department whose function it is to be a link between central and local administration, and to secure interactions between the two. Primarily, this body exercises the necessary control on behalf of the central government,—a function which is viewed as far more important than more or less nebulous Council schemes. Instituted in its present form by the codifying decree of April 1, 1921, but going back in its essentials to 1879, it arranges for a permanent supervision in Paris and for a "mobile inspection" by officials who travel round the colonies demanding explanations of any unusual features they may find. These inspectors correspond *directly* with the Minister, and unusual care is taken to secure their probity and isolation. In addition, there is a "permanent control," which is, as the name indicates, a body of inspection fixed in each of the three Governments-General. Finally, and distinct again, a "financial controller" is placed opposite each Governor-General to supervise all the acts of administration.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> See lengthy sections on inspection in any French colonial treatise (e.g. Foignet, 1925, p. 110, or Girault, 1922, 2.1.352) for the importance attributed to this institution in the colonial system.

<sup>31</sup> For its inception see report of 1889 Colonial Congress, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 45 *et seq.* A valuable report is by Girault in *Institut Colonial International. Compte Rendu*, 1908 session, p. 289 *et seq.*

The British system knows nothing like this over-elaborate control. The nearest approach is when Parliamentary Commissions or Committees visit individual colonies to examine some particular question, as with the McNeil-Chimman Lal committee for indentured Indians in 1912 or the Ormsby-Gore Commissions on African affairs in 1924-1925. But, apart from such extraordinary inquiries, all control is in the hands of the local parliaments or executive, according to the degree of responsible government. Naturally, colonial acts are overlooked at the Colonial and India Offices, just as they are by the *Direction du Contrôle* in Paris, but the British system does not provide for permanent officials who act as peripatetic spies acting independently of the normal administrators in the colony. Such a system is as extraneous to the English idea as the inquisitorial system of French justice is opposed to the British conception.

The French system is a typically Latin form of officialdom and must work in the direction of stifling individuality amongst the officials concerned. Risky or unconventional methods can never be employed, however they may be justified by the outcome. The means must always be scrupulously conventional, even if the results are trammelled by doing so. The form is everything, the goal nothing. The official must account for every act at any moment, and simply becomes an automaton. There is no room for those brilliant hazards which have been so noticeable in the colonial history, especially the native policy, of other Powers. The French system is one of excessive control,—and of the inertness and suspicion that such control engenders.

The British system assumes that the distance of the colonies necessitates a larger scope for the individual official and a consequent freedom from supervision: whereas the French hold that distance, inasmuch as it permits officials to abuse their powers the more easily, should necessitate a stricter control, if that were possible. It is realized that the factor of distance makes a greater concentration of power in the hands of individuals absolutely necessary, but the argument is that, the greater the powers, the more stringent the control. To them, power means potential corruption: hence the need for checks to prevent abuse or to restore the damage.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, power in the English system means opportunity for the individual. Thus, in the Pacific, the junior Resident in the Solomons is practically an untrammelled potentate in his district, if affairs go well; whereas, in New Caledonia, he is but a cog in a machine, and as powerless as a clerk in a *Mairie* in France.

There has never been anything like a travelling surveillance-corps in the British system, except within each colony, and it is difficult to think

<sup>32</sup> *Institut Colonial International. Compte Rendu*, 1905 session, for Girault, *De la surveillance à exercer sur les fonctionnaires aux colonies*, for this point of view.



of minor officials sending critical correspondence to the Colonial Office on the subject of the heads of the colony for the time being. This would be at variance with the whole English theory of official responsibility. In Great Britain, every colonial official represents the dignity and probity of the State: with the French, he is a potential self-seeker, and the assumption is that corruption will emerge unless checked. The one system thinks of opportunity for service, the other of opportunity for corruption.

Indeed, the whole system of *inspection* as carried out in the French colonies, however admirable it may be in theory, is one of the most striking instances of the sterility of their exaggerated officialdom. It is typical of the checks and balances of French official life; and represents that point of view which is so much concerned with the eradication of every loophole that might conceivably lead to abuse that it imposes numerous handicaps on average efficiency. A desire for theoretical perfection overrides practical requirements. The system is based on considerations of what might possibly happen, but it considers remote and unusual contingencies rather than the normal state of affairs. If it is true that such exaggerated checks are necessary to prevent abuse, then the entire colonial structure is at fault. What is needed is not an elaborate preventive organization so much as a training in *morale*. The French *inspection* reduces the problem to one of machinery: in reality, it is a moral matter. If, as they argue, material gain rather than service to his country is the aim of the colonial administrator, something is radically wrong with the education of their officials. In this sense, the very elaborateness of the decree of 1921 is the best testimony to the power of this cancer in undermining the body-colonial of France.

That is, there are two possibilities. Either the checks are needed or not needed. If they are, the French have no adequate concept of the nature of colonization as a duty. If they are not, they insult the great mass of French officials and condemn the French system as being impractically theoretical. In either case, a weak situation is revealed. Yet the French see in it only an admirable piece of *liaison*-work,—a wonderfully executed system of counterpoises something in the nature of an intricate and smoothly running mechanism. The curious feature is that there is no opposition to the system. At the time of the changes of 1921, the bulk of the reforms were simply on points of detail, such as moving the seat of the inspectors from Paris to the colonies. The system was accepted without dispute, it was only the manner of its enforcement that caused discussion. If anything, the codification of 1921 rendered it more stringent than ever and it remains an integral and seemingly ineradicable feature of French colonial organization.

Viewed as a theoretical system, the French *service d'inspection* is admittedly well rounded-off.<sup>22</sup> It certainly secures the independence of the inspectors,—at least, in so far as this can be made to depend on mechanical factors. The inspector belongs to a closed service: he can never become an administrator, nor can any administrator hope to enter his ranks. A man chooses an inspectorial career, and must remain an inspector. He thus has nothing to fear from any active official, because none of them, unless they resign and become politicians, can conceivably affect his destinies. He corresponds directly with the Minister, and, having in French parlance “the right to see all and hear all,” bases his report on the fullest information. And the final ban on any form of self-interest seems to be obtained by the rigid limitation of his functions to criticism. He is never an executive agent. At first, the system, as introduced to the Ile-de-Bourbon, allowed inspectors to carry out as well as to recommend reforms. But this confusion of executive and legislative acts made possible an element of self-interest, the result being that a decree of April, 1873, suppressed the old fixed controllers and instituted the idea of mobility. Ever since then, this has remained the essence of the scheme and a safeguard against the intrusion of purely local interests. Under no conditions can an inspector at present undertake administrative duties: under no conditions can he pander to particular interests. He is apart and above reproach.

But even this aloofness has its defects, because, by maintaining themselves apart from the ordinary channels of colonial existence, they are not readily susceptible to local currents of opinion and become somewhat colourless. Further, they tend to become automata expressing the point of view of the Ministry of the Colonies. They retain the mind of a functionary, although obviously their chief justification would be an alertness and originality quite outside the official mentality. In practice the only difference comes to be that their mechanical thought reflects the central point of view, as distinct from, or usually opposed to, the colonial. But the point is that the flexibility which would have rendered them so useful is overlaid by this pall of official outlook. Officials check officials, and the result is largely foregone,—sterility. The effective method of supervision—that employed by the English—consists in bringing a fresh mind to bear upon the situation. De Lanessan's missions in Indo-China or Ferry's in Algeria best prove this. They were the most fertile investigations in French colonial history, the best checks on colonial errors, and the most useful suggestions for future development.

<sup>22</sup> Girault, 1922, *op. cit.*, 21.1.361-363. See documents in *Les Fonctionnaires Coloniaux*, Vol. III, 1910 (publication of Bibliothèque Coloniale Internationale, 2nd series), p. 255.

But general inspection by officials who deal with the peculiar local conditions of a certain colony under the dictates of a supposed faculty of "general investigation" seems predestined to be relatively barren. Reforms of moment are scarcely likely to come in this manner, and such haphazard and *ex post facto* investigations are by no means the best means of either preventing or punishing delinquencies. The whole system, in fact, is very symmetrical, rather cumbrous, and not very useful.<sup>34</sup>

#### IV. Legislation for the Colonies

Having seen what bodies exist to connect Paris and the colonies, it is necessary to see exactly how legislation is worked out in practice for the colonies. This at once brings us to the crux of the whole colonial issue,—the vexed question of decentralization. Perhaps no other issue in French colonial policy has been so much discussed and so little solved. The whole ground is gone over periodically, each time as bitterly as before, and always with the same result. France does not seem able to choose between centralization and decentralization,—or rather, finds it difficult to decide how much decentralization will be accepted. The natural French instinct is for centralization: colonial evolution demands an increasing degree of decentralization: yet every consecutive concession is obtained only by the force of circumstances. Each one is fought for as it arises: there is no gracious concession of what will be inevitable in a few months. Paris is generally just behind, instead of just before, each increase of colonial power,—although therein lies the whole secret of effective colonial administration. The tardiness in this direction is the major cause of friction in the French colonial Empire.

The first feature of the situation,<sup>35</sup> from a legislative point of view, is that the supremacy of the French Parliament cannot be challenged. All power, residuary or otherwise, resides in Parliament, and the colonies have no powers unless specifically provided for. The French Parliament can veto any colonial legislation, even for those matters which were specifically given to certain colonies by the *sénatus-consulte* of 1854. The power of veto, far from being a meaningless survival as it is in the British Empire, is a very real instrument of maintaining central control. There is no convention of the constitution that it will not be employed, as in the case of the British Dominions; and so much is this understood that there is not a single protest in colonial literature against it or against

<sup>34</sup> For a frank statement of the criticisms of the system, and an answer to them, see Girault, 1922, 2.1.369.

<sup>35</sup> The best analysis of the situation is in Dareste, *Recueil Colonial*, 1915 ("Le Législateur colonial"), and 1912 ("Le promulgation et l'application des lois aux colonies"). What seems to be a disproportionately large space is generally devoted to "le régime législatif" in French colonial treatises.

the legislating powers of the French Parliament. This represents the very spirit of French colonial theory. <sup>35</sup>

A second principle is that the French Parliament can legislate for all colonies, even those which have the special privilege of a Government-General and a Council with budgetary powers. Not all French Acts apply to the colonies, it is true, but all may, by the inclusion of a special article, be made to so apply. Outside of such specifically applied laws, it is by no means clear how far the colonies come under metropolitan laws. Theory and practice and law all differ on the point. Even more confused is the question as to how otherwise the colonies may be legislated for.<sup>36</sup>

The starting-point is the distinction between France and the colonies, and its nature. Despite the principle of assimilation and the various pronouncements of the Revolutionary Assemblies that the colonies were "integral parts of the French Republic," it was clear that there was some distinction. The tendency in practice was to assume that the colonies were under a distinct *régime*. This was the case with all the constitutions of the nineteenth century, although, curiously enough, the existing constitution—that of 1873—is silent on the question. The result is that, in default of specific legislation on the topic, the matter has been relegated to juridical theory, while it has been taken for granted that the colonies *are* under a special *régime*. This seemed easy enough, but, unfortunately, did nothing to clear up the difficulty. It is clear that the colonies must have different arrangements from those of the mainland departments, and clear, too, that there must be special laws for them in many fields. But the real question is, how far do French laws apply *ipso facto* to the colonies, or how far they may be made so to apply, and, how, over and above this means of convertibility, legislation may be provided for the colonies? In practice the position is most confused. All French laws do not apply to the colonies, yet certain laws do, and others are specifically made for the colonies: but over and above these are many laws, not made for the colonies, not even extended to them by a special clause, yet still taken as applying to the overseas possessions.<sup>37</sup> It seems incredible that this position could pertain, but one has to remember the dominance of the *bureaux* in French colonization and their decision of policy to a large degree outside of Parliament altogether. Nor is this position as inexplicable as the failure even to mention the colonies in the organic law of a country which has a written constitution and which is thus, in theory at least, rigid.

Actually, the legislative *régime* of the colonies is determined by a *sénatus-consulte* of the Second Empire. As the Republican Constitution

<sup>36</sup> Dislère, *Traité de Législation Coloniale* (1906 edition), Vol. I, p. 249 *et seq.*

<sup>37</sup> See instance of this in Girault, 1922, 2.1.180, note 3.

failed to provide for them, there was no other way out of the difficulty than by falling back on some earlier measure. Before the fall of the Empire, the Constitution of 1854 was in operation. This had been most concise on the matter of colonial organization.<sup>88</sup> It had divided the colonies into two classes,—“the old colonies” (the sugar-islands of the West Indies and Réunion) and “the other colonies,” providing a more advanced *régime* for the former. The latter were taken as the norm. For them, legislation was to be by means of a simple Imperial decree. This was to be the system for all new colonies and for the existing colonies until they achieved a certain degree of development. When the Emperor thought that they had developed sufficiently, they were to come under the more privileged *régime* vouchsafed to the Old Colonies. In their case, decrees were to be used only for those cases not provided for in any other way. They were exceptions to the decree-*régime*. Certain matters had to be dealt with by decrees of the Council of State (as distinct from Imperial decrees), others by *sénatus-consultes*, while, for commercial matters, a law was necessary. It was only for the odds and ends that a simple decree sufficed. The bulk of legislation was done by some form of law, so that these privileged colonies could be termed “colonies under the law-*régime*,” as distinct from those still under decrees. The division under the Empire was extremely complicated and purely arbitrary. In view of the emphasis on colonial subordination, it was clear why a special law was necessary for tariff changes, although why property-matters came under a *sénatus-consulte*, and justice and education under the Council of State, is not clear, unless it was that Parliament desired to keep all economic matters directly under its control.

After this, the principle gradually emerged that, while certain specific matters required laws, the great bulk were settled for the colonies by decrees,—simple decrees for the backward colonies, decrees sanctioned by the Council of State for others. But this principle should have been of solely academic importance in 1871, unless it were specifically re-enacted in some form or other. Article 27 of the Constitution of 1854 should have ceased to function with that Constitution itself, but the Republicans, having failed to provide for the colonies in their own Constitution, had to resort to casuistry to keep the old law in operation. By some juridical subtlety, it was agreed that the *sénatus-consulte* of 1854, while losing its constitutional character, could remain as a law: it was only “de-constitutionalized,” to use the catchword of 1875.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Mérignhac, *Précis de Législation et d'économie coloniales* (1912), p. 254 et seq.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 256.—“It remains then only as an ordinary law which should have been voted before the advent of the republican *régime*.” Compare E. Antonelli, *Manuel de Législation Coloniale* (1926), p. 61.

It was reduced to the status of a simple law, although what attribute of mind prevented a similar argument applying to every other section of the Constitution of 1854 is not clear, particularly as the retention of Article 27 was nowhere specifically provided for, or even mentioned. It was simply assumed and has remained ever since. The whole colonial régime of France is thus worthless from a legal point of view and rests solely on an untenable convention. Theory and practice in a country with a written constitution by no means always coincide: but, even so such a faulty fundamental law is a trifle bizarre, to say the least of it.

The present position of jurisprudence in this regard, therefore, is that the French Parliament can, and does, legislate for the colonies on all matters. Metropolitan laws are not usually, but under certain conditions may be, applicable to the colonies without a specific clause to that effect. Over and above such laws, all colonial legislation, except for certain matters dealt with in the Constitution, is vested in the executive power. Legislation, subject to the restrictions of the *sénatus-consulte* of 1854, is by decree; and even metropolitan laws, while not specifically extended to the colonies, may in effect be applied to them by this means. That is, the legislator for the colonies under ordinary conditions is not Parliament (though Parliament may always intervene), but the President of the Republic. This suffices for all cases in which the *sénatus-consulte* of 1854 does not stipulate a law: for such exceptional matters (such as the *état civil* of colonists or the commercial régime) a law of the French Parliament is needed. Save for this, the decree is triumphant, in Algeria and the mandated territories as in the other colonies. The most serious limitations are that decrees cannot interfere in questions which have already been specifically dealt with by laws, and that the Constitution must be observed. The latter proviso implies that no decree can touch matters concerning State finances. A law, for example, was needed for the concession of the Dakar railway, because the State guaranteed a certain revenue, but not for the Saigon-Mytho railway in Indo-China, because there the guarantee was by the colony.<sup>40</sup>

What is evident from this arrangement is that no colonial assembly can really legislate, except for those budgetary expenses which are termed "optional." They may recommend changes, but these are ineffective unless and until the executive issues a decree proclaiming them. The only exceptions are in the protectorates of Tunisia and Morocco, where the decrees of the Bey or the *dahirs* of the Sultan are laws. But, in the colonies proper, legislation is either by a law of the French Parliament or, in ordinary cases, by an executive decree,—a

<sup>40</sup> Mérignhac (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 265.

position scarcely comprehensible to one accustomed to the English idea of responsible government.

This system of legislation by decrees, though occasionally praised for its rapidity and elasticity, is the subject of much attack, especially by jurists. The whole situation, especially because of the basis of 1854, is a nightmare from a juridical point of view, and, even if unassailable from this standpoint, not in accord with the needs of a great Empire. It can only be explained as a survival from earlier *régimes*,—a limping compromise that is neither clear in law nor efficient in practice. It has been asserted that its main justification is the desire of the central administration to keep the power of colonial legislation within its own hands, with the least possible amount of discussion or restriction. In its present form, the position is complicated,—that goes without saying. It is uncertain. Who can say, for instance, if any French laws since 1834 apply to Algeria, if no stipulation to that effect is provided in them? <sup>41</sup> It is understood that they do not, unless they modify a law already in force there. Yet, if this is so, why did not the famous law of August, 1883, gravely affecting a former law, so apply? Under precisely similar conditions, laws of 1893 and 1894, amending the Press-law, *did* so apply! Then again, did the law of 1896, which declared Madagascar a French colony, automatically bring French laws into operation there? <sup>42</sup> Jurisprudence replies in the affirmative in this case, yet admits that the decision is certainly contrary to the principles governing colonial legislation elsewhere. These are examples taken at random, and the legislative *régime* of the French colonies has many such. As Girault says, "there has been in this matter a veritable anarchy, especially since 1870," and there are not a few, but numerous, decrees whose legality, to say the least, is dubious.

For these reasons, jurists have stood out against the system from a legal point of view, and the colonial spokesmen, while not so much concerned with its legal absurdity, deprecate it as an anomaly. France has colonies, like Algeria and Indo-China, that are on the verge of securing extensive powers of self-government, yet their legislation is still determined for them by arbitrary decrees. Leroy-Beaulieu, for instance, held that the system, while serving certain purposes when the colonies were in their infancy and required a rapidly acting organization, was an anachronism once a certain stage of growth had been reached. <sup>43</sup> He

<sup>41</sup> Foignet (1925), *op. cit.*, p. 135.

<sup>42</sup> For this important issue in French colonization, see two opposite views in Dislère, *Législation Coloniale* (4th supplement, 1910), p. 11 *et seq.* A good analysis of the problem is in Galliéni, *Rapport sur Madagascar de 1896 à 1905*, Vol. II, p. 316 *et seq.*

<sup>43</sup> P. Leroy-Beaulieu, *De la Colonisation chez les Peuples Modernes* (8th edition, 1905), Vol. II, p. 670.

saw in it an inexcusable encroachment of the executive on the legislature and a surrounding of colonial matters with an air of official secrecy. The power of Parliament to intervene in any matter somewhat diminishes the force of the latter contention, but it must be admitted that, despite Parliament's undoubted legal right to intervene, a convention had grown up by which the *ordinary* matters of administration were to be left in the hands of the executive. Leroy-Beaulieu's point was thus practically, if not exactly legally, well taken.

Various concrete proposals have been made to end this antiquated system of decrees. Leroy-Beaulieu, the earliest of the organic reformers, wanted to commence by giving back to Parliament all of its power in connection with colonial legislation, and then, after laying down the main lines of colonial policy, having it delegate the exercise of its powers to the various local authorities. An initial measure of legislative centralization would thus be followed by an administrative decentralization. Girault's solution is somewhat similar. He would also give back Parliament its right to regulate the constitution of the colonies in practice, after which he would allow the central Parliament to intervene only where State finances or questions of general policy were involved, and leave all purely local matters to the governor and council. He holds that a developed colony under a *régime* of decrees is like a civilized community living in tents; and it is indeed pertinent to inquire how a general development is possible so long as there is stagnation in this important matter.

Though the leading specialists and the various colonial Congresses were practically in accord on this point,<sup>44</sup> every attempt to give a practical form to their theories has been checkmated. Most of their proposals were to amend the status of the Antilles, but one proposition in 1895 was to suppress the *régime* of decrees in its entirety.<sup>45</sup> But all met the same fate, and the system goes on as before. Some decrees have been proclaimed twice in the same place: others have not been proclaimed at all, but have been taken as proclaimed,—because they should have been: some laws apply to the colonies, and some do not—even the jurists are uncertain on the matter. Moreover, even if the system were efficient and uniform, it would still be uncalled for. Royal decrees in Holland and Orders-in-Council in Great Britain are comparatively unimportant, yet kindred decrees remain the normal method of legislation for the French colonies, even for Algeria and Indo-China. This question of legislative status is perhaps the best justification for the criticism

<sup>44</sup> E.g. *Compte Rendu du Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1909, paper by Girault, and recommendations, p. 139.

<sup>45</sup> *Journal Officiel*, docts. parl., 1895, Deps., p. 345.



that the French as yet have not started the work of colonial organization, for this is the basic reform, and nothing has been done. France still legislates for colonies as England did in the Plantation era, except that her decrees are thrown out more or less haphazardly, seemingly to produce hair-splitting points of juridical theory. Even the law-commentaries in use in France expose those weaknesses,<sup>46</sup>—a fact which in itself is a good commentary on their obvious nature. France attempts to regulate the affairs of 52½ million people by a *régime* of decrees, and has made no provision for development beyond this stage. In light of these facts, French colonial policy needs little explanation.

### V. Conclusion

The central organization of the French colonies is thus simple. There is the Ministry of the Colonies with its *bureaux*; and, save for the ponderous *Conseil Supérieur* and various lesser Commissions,<sup>47</sup> that is all. The *Bureaux* determine and enforce policy, the only check coming from Parliament, which is extremely averse to touching colonial questions or even securing urgently needed reforms. The French system comes to mean a centralized, permanent bureaucracy, resisting both the institution of lesser services in Paris (on the Messimy plan) and any delegation of its powers to the colonies themselves. It is a static organization, refusing to face the facts of development,—a trait that is most obvious in the increased centralization since 1918. The central body seeks, not to co-ordinate, but to control, and views every concession wrested by the colonies as a backward step.<sup>48</sup> France is in the position that England was in before the Durham Report, and reformers are so engrossed in economic activities that they neglect this lack of vitality in the centre. Though critics of many schools have demonstrated the weakness of this situation, everything goes on as before. Messimy and Viollette showed how there had never been a consistent policy in the sense of adapting the machinery of control to changing circumstances: Jules Harmand pleaded for a Colonial Constitution, with the Ministry superintending instead of executing details: Lucien Hubert deplored the lack of vitality in the central French organizations: and Regismanset showed how the Ministry interrupted colonial development. But change seemed out of

<sup>46</sup> E.g. Mériqnac (1912), p. 317 *et seq.*; Girault (1922), 2.1.197.

<sup>47</sup> These Commissions include a Committee of Public Works (1895), an Archives Commission (1896), a Commission for the Railway and Port of Réunion (1897), an Advisory Council of Litigation (1894), an Advisory Education Committee (1895), Commissions to supervise Colonial Banks (1901), an Advisory Council of Defence (1902), a Permanent Commission of Maritime Affairs (1912), an Inter-Ministerial Commission of Mohammedan Affairs (1911), and others.

<sup>48</sup> J. Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, pp. 236-248.

the question. Regismanset, for instance, claimed that all of the "innovations and reforms" officially favoured by the Ministry may be found in Seignelay or Vauban or Focillon, and are meaningless as applied to twentieth-century conditions!<sup>49</sup>

The trouble commenced when the Colonial Ministry was assimilated to other departments: that decision once taken and stereotyped by French officialdom, any real advance was out of the question, because the *bureaux* were not amenable to the advice of expert Commissions from outside or to any new influences. They had a system, a system of political subordination and economic assimilation, and beyond that, they would not, and do not, go. The events of the war have produced little change, except in the direction of stamping the colonial problem as more national than ever, and thus justifying every administrative nuance, every act of subordinating the colonies to France, on the grounds of national emergency. The Paris *bureaux* remain ponderously inert and, even if efficient, quite inadequate, because supported by none of the outside subsidiaries that existed, for instance, in Great Britain and Germany. The French system is one of a self-sufficient officialdom, and as such is mechanical and unprogressive. Therefore, until the various sections of the reorganized *Conseil Supérieur* obtain a vitality as separate sections, and until the colonies obtain greater powers of self-government, it is difficult to see how the position is to change. The French colonies, at present lumbering through a doldrum period as the British did in the first forty years of last century, demand a political reformer of the Durham type: so long as reforms are in terms of *mise en valeur* alone, and so long as there are no counter-forces to the *bureaux*, development is impossible. The colonies may enlarge themselves, but they will not, cannot, develop unless the system of control is changed, either in Paris or the colonies or in both.<sup>50</sup>

## VI. The Functionaries and their Training

From the first, the question of officialdom has occupied a leading place in French colonial matters. By the end of the eighties, France had a colonial population of 18 millions, to administer whom, especially in view of the accepted theories of assimilation and direct rule, was no small task. The matter was further complicated by the division of the colonies between three Ministries, because that meant from the outset that a uniform Colonial Service was out of the question. This very division predestined colonial organization to confusion. The officials

<sup>49</sup> C. Regismanset, *Questions Coloniales*: 1900-1912, pp. 44-45.

<sup>50</sup> H. Simon reorganized the central administration in June, 1919 (*L'Asie Française*, April, 1920, p. 112), but essentials remained as before.

of North Africa were always distinct, those of Algeria being under the Minister of the Interior, and those of Tunisia, and later Morocco, under the Foreign Minister. In other words, unless the principle was accepted that colonial officials were simply to be drawn from the metropolitan services without any special training, it was inevitable that there should be three distinct training systems for them,—with all the needless expense and lack of uniformity that such a division presupposes.

The arrangement of the colonial hierarchy was therefore singularly intricate. The North African officials were aloof from the start, and, even for the other colonies, there was no single Service. In general, there were three classes of functionaries. The most important section included those administrative and judicial officials who intended to spend the whole of their career in the colonies. They were appointed and controlled either by the chief of the State or by the Ministry concerned, and could go from colony to colony as ordered, even from Dahomey to the Marquesas, or from New Caledonia to the Antilles. Aiding them were officials from the *cadre local*—that is, local supernumeraries appointed by the Governor and limited to service in a special colony. But, as if losing no opportunity to complicate matters, France devised intricate arrangements whereby such local officials could be translated to the general service. Quite apart from these two were the technical branches,—education, public works, and the like,—the staffs of which were temporarily borrowed from the metropolitan services. Of these three classes, the first alone—the general officials under the control of the Minister of the Colonies—were functionaries proper, according to the French interpretation of that term as applied to the colonies; and it must be remembered that, just as the term “colonies” in France included but a part of the overseas empire (that outside North Africa), so the term “functionary” in turn was limited to one class of officials,—a curiously artificial manner of dealing with an involved situation.

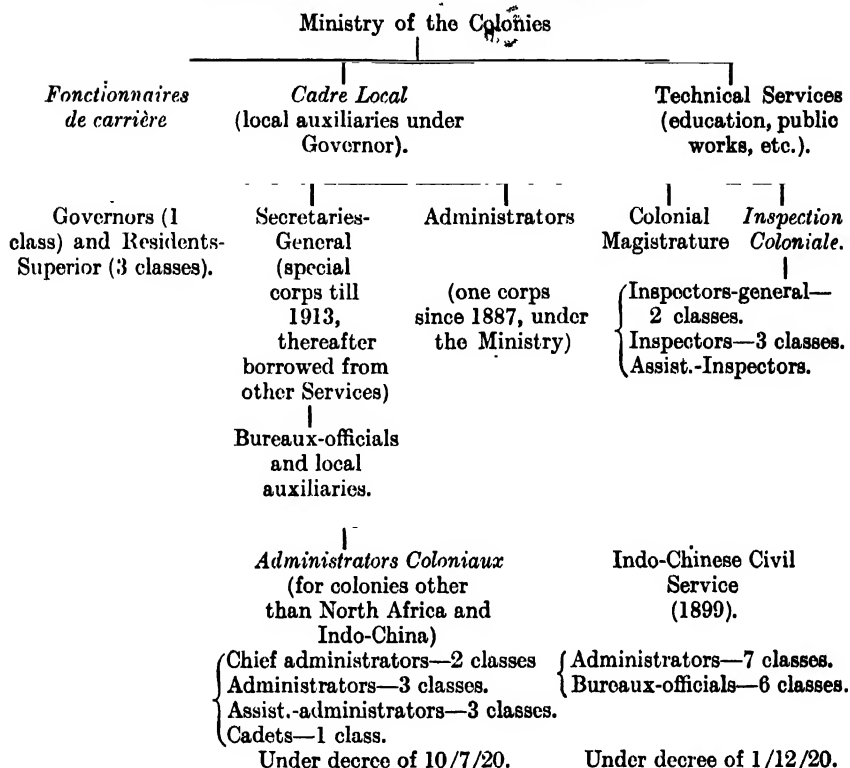
The position, however, did not end there. The “functionaries” proper did not belong to a single service. There were at least three quite distinct branches. The magistrates and the *service d'inspection* were shorn from the remainder and placed under special *régimes*: and, even within the remnant thus left, further divisions were admitted. After 1898, Indo-China was also severed from the rest of the colonies, from which, of course, Algeria and Tunisia had already been taken.<sup>51</sup> France wanted to set up an *élite* of administrators in this far Eastern colony and, directly inspired by the British organization of the Indian Civil Service, instituted an Indo-Chinese Civil Service, with seven classes

<sup>51</sup> Decree in full in *Les Fonctionnaires Coloniaux*, 1910 (Bibliothèque Coloniale Internationale, 2nd series), Vol. III, p. 326.

# THE CENTRAL ORGANIZATION

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## COLONIAL OFFICIAL HIERARCHY\*



APPROXIMATE COLONIAL SALARIES (by decrees of 1920)—*not* including the various bonuses or the "colonial supplement," which amounts to 90 per cent. in Equatorial Africa, 80 per cent. in the New Hebrides, 70 per cent. in West Africa, Madagascar, Indo-China, and Oceania, 50 per cent. in New Caledonia, and 65 per cent. in the Old Colonies.

Governor-General.—Algeria, 110,000 f.; others, 50,000–55,000 f.

Governor and Resident-Superior (3 classes).—22,000–30,000 f.

Secretary-General.—The rate of salary in the service from which he is borrowed.

Secretary-General's staff (*Cadre General*).—*Chefs de bureau*, 11,000–16,000 f.  
—*Sous-chefs*, 6,000–8,500 f.

Administrators.—Chief, 2 classes, 16,000–19,000 f.  
—Ordinary, 3 classes, 11,000–14,000 f.  
—Assistant, 3 classes, 7,500–10,000 f.  
—Cadets, 6,000 f.

(The Indo-Chinese rates for the last two classes are slightly higher.)

\* Officials of North Africa are not included in the above, but are under the Ministry of the Interior or the Foreign Minister.

of actual administrators and six divisions of clerical officials in the *bureaux*. Elsewhere in the colonies, or rather the dismembered fragments still remaining, there was the one service of "colonial administrators." As reorganized from time to time, these came to include two classes of chief-administrators, three of administrators, three of assistant-administrators, and one of administrative cadets on probation. But the essence of the system lay in the fact that these administrative services, both in Indo-China and elsewhere, were limited in practice to the lesser posts. For the general work of direction, there were two services applying to all of the colonies (except North Africa). The first of these included the Governors and the Residents-Superior, who were for many years graduated according to an intricate system based on the importance of the provinces they administered, but who, since a decree of July, 1921, are now in a uniform class. The Governors are all of the same status and the Residents-General are of three classes, status no longer depending on the provenance of their duties and the importance of the work they were doing. All Class 1 Residents are now equal, whether they control an African kingdom or a stagnant island in the Indian Ocean. To this extent, a desirable simplification has been introduced into the colonial organization.<sup>52</sup>

So far, the system arranged for the minor administrators and for the general heads. But what puzzled France for so long was the gap that still remained,—the difficulty of linking the general government of the colony with the officials in the field. This detail, perhaps more than any other, has caused trouble out of all proportion to its seeming importance. At first, as immediate collaborators of the governors, and as mouthpieces, so to speak, between them and the actual administrators, Ministers of the Interior were set up. But, by reason of certain anomalies, they were suppressed in 1898 and replaced by Secretaries-General, the definition of whose functions certainly made theory more in touch with the realities of the situation. These Secretaries-General constituted a special corps, completely distinct from the other administrators. They were deemed to be specially trained officials, limited to this *liaison*-work. The Secretary-General was an expert, and provided the necessary element of permanence in the administration. Governors came and went at such a bewildering pace that some prominent official had to remain on the spot to look after general interests. Not the least of the Secretary-General's functions was thus to act as interim-Governor, and, in places like Oceania, and at times in Indo-China, more work was accomplished in the interimates than during the official term of the respective Governors. On the other hand, certain difficulties emerged. The Secretaries-General,

<sup>52</sup> Decree of 21/7/21 (in full in Girault, 1922, 2.1.320).

from being the permanent element, become too much so. Their actions tended to become stereotyped, they usurped functions that were not rightfully theirs, and their relationship to the Governors came to cause trouble. Where the personalities of the Governor and the Secretary-General did not harmonize, a deadlock was reached: and it was seen then, for an office where so much depended on co-operation, the Governor should have some part in choosing his main subordinate. In 1913, therefore, France, with a customary preference for a direct reversal of policy in place of a gradual change, abolished the special corps of Secretaries-General at a stroke, and gave the Governor power to name any official—doctor or clerk or engineer or administrator—as his immediate collaborator.<sup>53</sup> As the clerical staff, both local and general, is under the Secretary-General, and as he is in many ways the pivot of the administration, such a decision, paving a way as much for favouritism and the nomination of untrained men as for freedom to appoint vigorous characters, plays no small part in influencing the existing organization of the French colonies. Indeed, the history of French colonial administration might be fully written in terms of the Secretary-Generalship.

At present, then, France has three groups of colonies geographically, three classes of officials within the colonies, and four distinct official services applying to all of the non-Mediterranean colonies, with intricate relationships within and between each of these divisions. The general features of this involved system will be analysed at a later stage: suffice to note here how cumbrous and intricate the general organization is, and how difficult it must of necessity be to secure the application of general rules under such a system of cleavage.

Apart from the customary attacks on official *tracasserie* and *gaspillage*, the problem first attracted notice when the question of training colonial officials assumed an aggravated form. When the colonies were in the military stage before 1870, it was assumed that colonial administrators were the work of Providence rather than of their teachers in France, and that the necessary auxiliary training consisted in imbibing wisdom through the process of watching senior officials in the field. Unfortunately for this theory, however, it did not operate very well in practice, once the colonies had passed the stage of conquest. What happened was that the tyro was forced to fit himself into the military machine and assimilate useless rote that could as easily have been obtained by sojourning for ever at St. Cyr or reading some seventeenth-century treatise on tactics. But when it came to dealing with minute questions of Arab anthropology and of deciding policies that would conform to the principles of native life, something went wrong. The traditional lore

<sup>53</sup> Foignet (1925), *op. cit.*, p. 235 *et seq.*

of the militarists no longer seemed constructive,—a fact which soon became evident even to the conservative expansionists. Consequently, the question of colonial training became a much-discussed issue during the eighties, although, practically to the end of the century, the dominant note was that of the old school, which denied the necessity of any training except the practical observation in the field of one's superiors in the official hierarchy, the importance of the information gained being in direct proportion to seniority. In these days, summed up a French expert, senility was usually a guarantee for experience in the colonial world.

The actual reforms in this direction thus came to be the work—and the much-despised work—of a minority, as colonial reforms usually were in France. Briefly speaking, it was the new factors that entered in the late eighties that forced the rate of change. The French Empire had grown so enormously that the former haphazard methods no longer sufficed. At the Colonial Congress of 1889, Isaac was not certain of the methods that should be employed, but what he did know was that "France had to have a policy."<sup>54</sup> Even the most martial observer saw that colonial administration was no longer limited to military conquest: more and more, the phrase, "native policy," was intruding itself, and was seen to involve exceptionally difficult and quite new problems. Under these conditions, a careful observation of the problems and a special training to meet them were alike inevitable; and France was forced by the relentless pressure of facts into training her colonial officials. Luckily, the previous system was revealing its faults at this very moment. Indo-China, with its favouritism and inept officialdom, was a known scandal: the Antilles were little better: Algeria reeked of *refoulement*, with all of the official weaknesses that this was known to cover; and the Pacific colonies were travesties of efficiency. "For a long time," a legal treatise summed up rather reservedly, "the recruitment of colonial functionaries did not take place with all the care and selection needed. Instead of sending to the colonies experts trained for their task by a special preparation, the French made the colonies receptacles for the elements unwanted at home,"<sup>55</sup>—those who left their country for their country's good.

The need was thus evident, and became more pressing every moment when France moved onwards in Tunisia, Indo-China and West Africa in these years, and was thinking of going to Madagascar and penetrating inland from the Congo to the Nile. Colonial officials were needed as never before, both in quantity and quality: and the country certainly

<sup>54</sup> *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National, 1889-1890, Vol. 1, p. 15.*

<sup>55</sup> Mérignhac (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 446. Cp. Girault, 1922, 2.1.347.

had to take some steps to meet the situation. But the question was : In what direction could she move ? How ~~could~~ colonial officials be trained ? Many, perhaps most, of the experts were inclined to follow the English model.<sup>56</sup> The Indian Civil Service, with its competitive examination and its practical experience acquired during the period of probation, was eagerly studied in France in the eighties and accepted as unquestionably the ideal system. Its application to the French problem, however, was another matter. It was cynically stated that, if a system of examination, and especially a system as strict as that for India, were applied to the French colonial service, the colonies would have to administer themselves ! The trouble was that the French despised the colonies, especially because a colonial appointment at that time was a euphemism for labelling its recipient as a failure at home. A man with a promise of a career would not stoop to the colonies, unless, of course, he were a soldier. That is why French civil officials in the colonies were for so long of a low type, and why France found the problem so difficult in the late eighties, especially when anti-colonialism, sharpened by the Ferry fights of 1884-1885, was still so rampant.

Under these conditions, the British system as pursued in India could obviously not apply. As an alternative, France had two examples from which to argue. The Dutch had for long had a colonial school to train their officials for the Javanese colonies. Their "Administrative Academy of the East Indies" was directly the French model and must be recognized as the pioneer establishment for the training of colonial officials.<sup>57</sup> The Dutch system, of securing tribute through Residents controlling the Rajahs from behind the scenes, was one dependent on the utmost efficiency, and thus, by its very nature, necessitated an elaborate and specialized training. Reinforcing this experience, France had a somewhat similar institution within her own colonies. In Indo-China, where untrained officials wrought more havoc at that time than in any other French possession, there had been a "Collège des Stagiaires" since 1874. This had been instituted at Saigon by Luro, that official who alone had carefully studied Annamite organization and whose works protested against the ignorance of French administrators in destroying native customs.<sup>58</sup> On a small scale, his results had been very favourable and had shown that the Dutch model could easily be extended to the French sphere of action.

<sup>56</sup> Chailley-Bert's report in *Institut Colonial International. Compte Rendu*, 1895 session, p. 272, or J. Chailley-Bert, *Dix Années de Politique Coloniale* (1902), p. 127. Compare E. Boutmy, *Le Recrutement des Administrateurs Coloniaux* (1895).

<sup>57</sup> *Les Fonctionnaires Coloniaux* (1910), *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 116 *et seq.* ; Report of Colonial Congress of 1889, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 91.

<sup>58</sup> Report of Colonial Congress of 1889, *op. cit.*, p. 90.



A decree of November 23, 1889, therefore set up the *École Coloniale* in Paris, to train students who wished to take up colonial appointments. The astonishing feature of its early years was the antagonism it had to fight down. Even the "colonials," a limited body as they were in the France of Ferry and Etienne, were largely opposed to it,—a fact which may perhaps be explained by the fact that their ranks were composed mainly of retired soldiers and officials who were not inclined to admit the necessity of any training beyond the one they themselves had undergone. The Colonial Congress of 1889, for instance, was strongly opposed to the new principle. Many of its members held that the old method of practical training was far the better and that the recruit had to learn by experience, even if his charges suffered somewhat in the process! The Congress actually considered at length a proposition to abolish the new-fangled *École Coloniale* altogether<sup>59</sup>; and it must be remembered that this Congress was one of specialists, and perhaps the most important ever held in France, because, by adopting the principle of assimilation in all its branches, it decided the bases of French policy for many years. Even though the extremist proposition was not accepted, the Congress adopted the view that the new *École Coloniale* should not have any monopoly of recruitment and that all of the old channels should remain open. Finally, as if to leave no doubt of its opinion, the Congress expressed the view that "for certain colonies and certain careers, the *École Coloniale* is so constituted that, instead of realizing the desired end, its influence will probably be rather bad!"<sup>60</sup> The new school, therefore, had a hard and long fight, especially when the African militarists were so triumphant throughout the nineties and when officials continued to be appointed by the same old methods of favouritism.

The *École Coloniale* itself was organized on the principle of affording a certain basic instruction to all pupils alike and then adding to this a specialized training for the particular career the student wished to adopt. At first it had sections for Africa, Indo-China, the penal service, and the commissariat,—a somewhat curious division, especially in view of the absence of any special training for the most important colonial field, that of Northern Africa! This organization was to meet the needs of the new Empire, that conquered since 1885, and it was brought up to date by an important decree of February, 1902, which changed several emphases to take into account the results of the wars of the nineties.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Report of Colonial Congress of 1889, Vol. I, p. 85 *et seq.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 93; Vol. II, pp. 47-48.

<sup>61</sup> *Les Fonctionnaires Coloniaux*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I (1897), p. 97 *et seq.*; Vol. III (1910), p. 259 *et seq.*, for the various decrees.

Under the system thus set up, students entered the School by a competitive examination and attended a two-years' course. It was understood that, while they were receiving their special colonial training, they were to obtain their law-licence,—the examination for which necessitated a training in civil and commercial law, civil procedure, and financial legislation. While doing this, they were to pass the special examinations of the *École Coloniale*, both the general course which everybody had to take and the course pertaining to their own career, whether African or Indo-Chinese or penal. Both of these courses were spread over the two years. For example, as modified to 1909, the general course included French colonial policy, French colonial economics, and "colonial productions" in the first year, and, in the second, five important subjects, the range of which remains the best testimony to French versatility in the colonial field. Having studied the details of French colonization in the first year, the students in the second had to pass examinations in foreign colonial policy, the *mise en valeur* of foreign colonies, the administrative organization of French colonies, colonial administrative law, elements of colonial anthropology, topography, and administrative *comptabilité*<sup>62</sup>—and this in an age when comparative studies, economic emphasis, and the importance of anthropology were all practically unrecognized by other colonial Powers! The "general course" at the *Ecole Coloniale* in Paris remains one of the most important contributions France has made to colonial policy, and cannot be too highly praised. Indeed, France's position, even in 1902, may challenge comparison in this regard with Great Britain's to-day!

Side by side with the general course were the specialized trainings. That of Indo-China, for instance, included detailed studies of the geography, institutions and administration of the country; instruction in Annamite, Cambodian and Thai; and the reading of the customary Annamite and Chinese pieces. That of North Africa dealt with the geography and administration of the seaboard States and then with Moslem law and the Arabian and Malagasian languages, and ensured that the young official should know something of the special problems with which he would have to cope. As conditions changed from time to time, the special sections were transformed. Thus, the anomalous and over-emphasized commissariat section was changed; a special section for the colonial magistrature was set up in 1905; the commercial section with its single year's training went in 1913; a special section for North Africa, long overdue as it was, was inaugurated in 1914; and, finally, preparatory and native sections were introduced.

Having secured his law-licence and passed both the general and

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263 *et seq.*

special sections of the *École Coloniale*, the student obtains his brevet and is ready for the period of probation which he must undertake at the outset of his actual life-work. That is, the French system does not substitute an institutional training for the period of cadetship that the Indian Civil Service knows, as is commonly supposed: it first of all gives the training in the *École Coloniale* and then insists on the probationary period of one or two years in addition. Each year a certain number of places are reserved for the students in the central administration, the colonial magistrature, the administrative corps of both Indo-China and the colonies in general, the Indo-Chinese customs, and even should they so desire, in the office-staffs of the Secretaries-General and the "general administration." But, as the *cadre general*, that is the clerical side, is of a lower status and has only forty-five functionaries in all, as compared with the administrative branch's 941, most go to the latter, for which, of course, their training is especially designed.<sup>63</sup> It seems a needless waste to join the ranks of the clerks who are selected by an ordinary examination from a far wider field. The above-quoted numbers, however, do not include the "crack" colonial service, that of Indo-China, which is quite distinct and which is also open to students of the School. The average student, therefore, secures an administrative cadetship, either in the general body or in the specialized Indo-Chinese branch, and, after a successful period of probation, either for one or two years, receives an appointment as third-class assistant-administrator, nearly half of whose ranks are specifically reserved for him. It will be noted that the *École Coloniale* has no monopoly of appointments at any stage: it would be very difficult to conceive a French colonial system where there was not an opening for patronage! At every stage, untrained officials may, and do, enter, both at the bottom and more particularly as one ascends the ladder, at the top of which, it is little exaggeration to say, the places are reserved for political appointments.

In so far as it goes, however, the French system of training is an admirable one. The Dutch, by the nature of things, is more specialized and unitary, because they have only the one set of colonial problems with which to cope, so that, for scope, the French remains unrivalled. Germany for her colonies relied on borrowing as far as possible from the metropolitan services and had no central Colonial School, although a certain degree of training was afforded at the School of Oriental Languages, the School of Commerce, and the Hamburg Colonial Institute.<sup>64</sup> England was the least progressive of the nations in this regard, notwithstanding the urgency of her needs. Her services were recruited in the main by

<sup>63</sup> Girault (1922), 2.1.330, 349.

<sup>64</sup> *Les Fonctionnaires Coloniaux* (1920), *op. cit.*, p. 143 *et seq.*

examination from the Universities, but no special training in colonial problems was given, save during the period when the applicant was a cadet on probation, and there was no adequate training in anthropology, either practical or theoretical,—a state of affairs that needs no comment.

On the other hand, it would be unwise to rhapsodize unduly over the French position, which, admirable as it is in many ways, is by no means the perfect solution of the problem. It contains many weaknesses. The courses at the School are overburdened with that study of the legal side of administration which has always characterized French colonialism. French colonial treatises, for instance, are really legal commentaries, and the official training is largely of this kind. As a corollary, the training tends to be largely academic in its nature. For instance, there is much commentary on the origins of Mohammedanism, little on the practical policy (perhaps because it is so difficult to define !) that France adopts towards Islam. Similarly, living languages tend to become subordinated to studies of the past, and native institutions examined in the detached manner of archæology, rather than as something vital and living. Many of the courses have little vitality, and, however admirable they would be in a research University (in the adjacent School of Oriental Studies, for instance), might with advantage be replaced by more practical studies in an institution whose sole function is the training of officials. The moral of this was best pointed in Indo-China, where, despite the emphasis on the teaching of languages in the early years of this century, very few of the administrators spoke the tongue of the innermost tribes. Thai, Cambodian, and Annamite figured prominently in the courses of the *École Coloniale* and in various alarmed decrees of the Ministry : but, on the spot, administrators depended on interpreters, one episode in *Les Sauterelles* having a real application to the colonial world. During the rising in the play (and Fabre was drawing on the actual events of the previous six years in Indo-China), the Tmer troops were left without interpreters and (" The imbeciles ! We've been thirty-five years in their country and they still can't speak our language ! " said one of the characters) the Director of the School of Oriental Studies was appealed to. " But I don't know Tmer ! I know Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan and even ancient Tmer, but not the present spoken language ! " In much the same spirit, a graduate of the *École Coloniale* might very well know more about the Moslem commentaries of the fifth century (have not the researches of the Director, M. Hardy, so clearly revealed these things ?), but not quite as much about the more or less abortive attempts to codify Moslem law so that it would conform, at least to some degree, to the needs of the situation of to-day.

It is all a matter of direction, and one may ponder whether the elaborate lecture-courses which are periodically plastered over the walls in the Avenue de l'Observatoire for the delectation of the nursemaids of the Luxemburg are as useful to the embryonic administrators going out to the Upper Niger or to Laos, as they are for revealing the erudition of the staff! Nevertheless, this is a question of detail, and it may safely be said that the French accomplishment, its obvious faults notwithstanding, far outrivals that of the other colonial Powers. France alone has systematically attacked the problem of training her colonial officials, and the courses given undoubtedly make the student cognizant of the details of the administrative *régime* and leave him with that basis with which he can continue his observations from the point at which the Delafosses and Vignons and Hardys leave off. He can, so to speak, attach his training to the problems he encounters, and modify that training to cope with the problems. Under the British system, to the contrary, the new official has either to fall into the administrative rut or attack his problem in a purely empirical manner. The French educational system and the nature of French officialdom being what they are, the courses at the *École Coloniale* represent a conspicuous triumph,—one of those touches of mystery that, from time to time, have transmuted the drabness of their colonial effort.

France thus has a body of colonial officials partly trained at the *École Coloniale* and partly enlisted by various means—examination or nomination (with everything that nomination includes)—from outside. The resultant mixture is peculiarly French. The colonies, especially before the reorganization of 1920–1922, were deluged with these mixed classes of officials, and the French system came to have three distinct characteristics. It provided a wonderfully good training for some of its permanent officials: it adulterated this leaven by the addition of untrained favourites and especially by a proletariat of European officials who performed functions that practically every other colonial Power left in the hands of native auxiliaries: and it arbitrarily allotted the highest posts to politicians,—not, be it noted, such decorative Governorships as the British Dominions have, but directly administrative posts. In Indo-China, for instance, each Governor-General was a politician, some without any previous colonial experience, even that gained by discussing the budgets in Parliament.

The defects of such a mixed system have always been noticeable. The colonies, without exception, have had far too many functionaries,—that is the first feature of the scheme. It is estimated, for instance, that France employs three European officials where England has one. In Cochin-China, there were eighty-six high officials in 1910 for an area

and population for which British India had fifteen! <sup>65</sup> Indo-China had one European official to every 7,900 people; the Dutch in Java, one to 76,000! In all, Indo-China had 5,683 functionaries in 1911, mostly performing routine details that could have safely been left to natives far more backward than the Annamites. The minor officials received from £250 to £500 yearly and, without exception, did work that the British and Dutch left to natives. <sup>66</sup> As Messimy reported in his budget-speech in 1910, "it would appear from the budget that one was concerned more with discovering work for the officials to do than in finding suitable officials for the work!" In consequence, no less than a third of the general and a half of the local budgets went for the payment of officials! And this in a country whose natives had a traditional capacity for the art of administration! Nor did the expense end with salaries. A third of the total *personnel* was always on leave, the remaining two-thirds were devising new methods of expenditure. All had articles of every conceivable kind provided at the State's expense—a report of 1905, for instance, while not objecting to the provision of the ordinary illustrated reviews, added with a telling lack of comment that "the supplementary list is suggestive,—*Ma Chemise brûle* side by side with *La Carrière de Lucette*, and *Sacré Porlut* with the *Memoirs of Mademoiselle Flore*!" <sup>67</sup> Even a long-suffering inspector felt constrained to point this out. The colonies seemed to exist partly as a haven for officials, and there was little difference in this regard between Tahiti, Indo-China, and the Antilles, although climatic conditions made the state of affairs in West and Equatorial Africa a little different.

With this excessive *personnel* and wasteful expenditure went a chronic instability. Officials were constantly changing: that is why the *régime de l'interimat* came to be described as the French method of governing her colonies. Cochin-China had forty Governors in forty-one years, Annam thirty in twenty-six years, Tonkin twenty-eight in twenty-six years, Tahiti forty in thirty years, Algeria fifty-one in fifty-two years. An official might go from Senegal to New Caledonia and thence to Madagascar within three or four years! Under such conditions, continuity of policy, and still more, reforms suitable to the situation, were practically out of the question. When a Governor retained his post for a number of years, therefore, he was an exception. Doumer's greatest service in Indo-China it was said, although he really created the country, was to have lasted for five years! Not till a decree of July, 1921, was a Governor's tenure in any way certain. After that date, five years was to be the

<sup>65</sup> Messimy, *Notre Œuvre Coloniale* (1910), p. 144; Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, pp. 217-219.

<sup>66</sup> F. Bernard, *L'Indo-Chine* (1901), p. 43; A. Métin, *L'Indo-Chine et l'Opinion* (1916), pp. 97, 106-107.

<sup>67</sup> Quoted in Messimy (1910), *op. cit.*, p. 148.

normal period, but, until then, arbitrary changes were the rule rather than the exception.

At present, the position has been somewhat improved. A Governor, though still subject to recall, has a certain security of tenure under normal conditions; payment is regularized throughout the empire; and officials are classified according to their status, irrespective, in the main, of the geographical situation of the colony they may chance to be in.<sup>68</sup>

But these reforms only touch the outskirts of the problem and serve more to draw attention to the existing abuses than anything else. The French official world in the colonies still stands in need of radical reforms. The most obvious need is to infuse some order into the administration. It is too much to expect that the official hierarchies of the three North African States shall be made to correspond with those of the colonies proper, but, within the colonies, it is surely anomalous to have the existing distinction between Indo-China and what can only be described as "the rest minus North Africa."

Against this it is asserted that the Indo-Chinese service, the "crack" corps, represents something special and should not be touched. But this is a confused line of thought. The Indo-Chinese organization, since its reconstruction in 1899 and 1920, is certainly more progressive than the remainder, but that is because it stands for specialization,—a principle that might well be extended to all of the colonies. There is a need, as experts admit, of stabilizing the official world, but that is only possible by way of specialization.<sup>69</sup> The British system of allowing officials to obtain local knowledge by a protracted sojourn in one place, as in India, and even to spend the whole of their career within one country, is the one, *par excellence*, adapted to the French colonial world, between the different parts of which there is so little similarity. The specialization of the Indo-Chinese service since 1889 is therefore a move in the right direction, the institution of a special North African section at the *École Coloniale* in 1914 another. But it is inconceivable that the Empire should be allowed to resolve itself, as it has done, into Indo-China, versus North Africa, versus "the rest," with a few services extending to all colonies, as a change. If the overlapping services were removed, and if the Indo-Chinese model were extended to West Africa and Madagascar, and specialized officials attached to each of the four services thus set up, the French colonial organization, so far as its officials were concerned, would know some order. In other words, the present sections, known as the *administrateurs coloniaux* and the *cadre général des Secrétaires-généraux*, whose members can be sent anywhere, must be replaced by

<sup>68</sup> Decrees of 10/7/20, 1/12/20, and 21/7/21.

<sup>69</sup> Mérighnac (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 378.

localized bodies,—a transformation which would increase both simplicity and efficiency. It is only in this way that the language difficulty can be solved, or that a *rapprochement* with native needs and interests can be secured. The only generalized service would then be the *service d'inspection*, and to that, as has been seen, special conditions must of necessity apply, if it is to perform its functions.

With this must go some amelioration of the present position as it concerns the higher officials. Presumably, the politician-Governors have to remain (and it must not be forgotten that the introduction of such outside blood at times, as with Doumer and Sarraut and Long in Indo-China, means a fresh outlook and vigorous reform), but, for the mass, purely ornamental functions would seem to suffice, if there *has* to be some colonial drain for the by-products of French politics. The English system in this regard, though often irritating to the colonies, never becomes a menace, as does the French, because their Governors have little actual power. But, with the French, it is different. In the Indo-Chinese Civil Service, for instance, prize administrative corps of France though it is, the body is in the main a closed service only until the important posts are reached. But is there any reason why, the control from Paris being as extensive and immediate as it is, even these posts too should not be closed? The problem of affording ultimate employment for the man who makes colonial administration his career has not really been solved by France. Governors have usually been appointed for purely political or personal reasons. Doumer and Long, turbulent Radicals, were thus banished to do their worst in Indo-China. Where this did not apply, the Governors were usually soldiers, like Gallieni or Lyautey. There is only one outstanding instance of a comparatively young *gouverneur de carrière*,—van Vollenhoven, appointed to West Africa in his early thirties. Usually, the Indo-Chinese model applied,—a Governor was a politician sent out, either to clear the air of metropolitan politics a little or to reverse a previously applied policy. This accounts for the absence of any uniform policy in most French colonies, and for that alternation of uncalled-for changes and a complete somnolence which has summed up most of French colonial efforts. And this position still applies. The French have an admirable system of training their young officials, but have not yet reached the stage when the higher posts are filled by a selective movement upwards from the ranks of these trained men. The account of the various Governors in *Les Sauterelles* is thus more than satire: it is history, and, as has been said, the French aggravate their offence by giving power as well as position to these *hauts exils*.

With this general cleansing movement towards a millennium in the



colonial hierarchy (a movement as unattainable as a millennium, it is to be feared) could go a reform of the method of recruitment. Instead of the present system, which offers graduates of the *Ecole Coloniale* a good chance and then swamps them with untrained but influential outsiders, the entry to the colonial service could be made uniform. The gates of the *Ecole Coloniale* should be the only avenue to go in. Deserving individuals from the other services in the colonies might still be chosen as at present, save that, instead of being promoted at once, they would be sent to the School for a preliminary training. Otherwise, if the existing system continues, the advantages of a training at the *Ecole Coloniale* must tend to become minimized, and such a policy is naturally self-annulling.

Lastly, and perhaps most immediate, is the need of providing scope for natives, and, at the same time, removing the cumbrous European proletariat in the colonies. A start was made in this direction by a decree of December, 1920, which reorganized the Indo-Chinese services in such a manner as to leave more and more posts for the natives; but the provision at the *Ecole Coloniale* for them is still too circumscribed, and there is little outlet for the higher-educated natives, say, in Indo-China and Algeria. But France does not admit the need of many native auxiliaries and does not recognize the worth of those she has. In Algeria, for instance, of 849 sheikhs, 739 receive less than £100 a year, and, even in the idyllic existence with which romanticists surround these much-maligned native auxiliaries, a sheikh with a harem of fifteen members and the necessity of entertaining numerous visitors of note must find it difficult on £2 a week! Only one native *adjoint* in Algeria receives more than £200 a year, the average being a few pounds a month.<sup>70</sup> Similarly, in Indo-China, a native secretary received little more than a pound a week, and even a *Tong-Doc*, a Governor of a Province, £100 a year! But France claimed that she could not be accused of illiberality, because, in Indo-China, she treated the Indian immigrants from the five towns as Europeans (probably because they had a vote while the mandarins did not!), even to the extent of allowing them six-months' furlough every five years,—to recuperate from the Asiatic climate!<sup>71</sup>

At present, France has an empire of 55 million people, yet has made little effort to solve the problem of utilizing native officials. Algeria was assimilated; Indo-China deluged with nearly 6,000 European officials; West Africa ruled directly and with the Nigerian model specifically banned, in so far as the employment of natives for important posts was concerned; and the old colonies were filled with officials on

<sup>70</sup> Ibn Habbas, *L'Afrique Française vue par un Indigène* (1914), pp. 47-50.

<sup>71</sup> P. Doumer, *L'Indo-Chine Française* (1905), p. 75.

the best French models : but Tunisia and Morocco were there to demonstrate the advantages of employing native subsidiaries. Such a utilization meant increased efficiency, it was cheaper, and it lessened native discontent, both by lowering the burden of taxation and by offering a visible field of progress to the natives. But the natural French *penchant* towards direct administration and the necessity of finding employment for so many officials from home combined in the opposite direction ; and the problem remains unsolved, discontent in Algeria, Tunisia, and Indo-China increasing the while.

The French official hierarchy thus remains one of paradoxes. In some ways it is the most expertly trained in the world, in others the most riddled by patronage. It lacks a definite organization and is confused in every conceivable way, each successive set of reforms, that of 1920-1921 for instance, raising a crop of new problems, so long as the fundamental bases remain unchanged. There are too many officials ; the lower ranks are not sufficiently paid ; they impose too great a charge on the local budgets ; and opportunity and initiative are both minimized by the confusion. It has always been said that the French colonies were in the grip of a bureaucratic octopus : budget-reformers for the last twenty years have pointed out the faults of the system and have reiterated their demands so frequently and so identically that the listeners are wearied : every successive reformer is at accord at least on this point : and the system has been attacked and satirized *ad nauseam*. Its faults are evident to all, yet it still continues. It simply extends to another field and in a particularly acute form those notorious evils of officialdom which pertain in France itself, and which everybody recognizes and nobody seems able to change. Under the conditions, it would be little exaggeration to modify the creed of the old *Pacte Colonial* and say of France that " a colony is made what it is by and for the officials." But, after all, from half to two-thirds of each local budget is left for other purposes than paying officials, even if the interest on loans previous officials have contracted has first to be met !



PART II

FRENCH COLONIAL THEORY IN  
PRACTICE



## CHAPTER VI

### ALGERIA

#### I. The Period of Origin : 1830-1880

ALGERIA was France's first and greatest experiment in her second Colonial Empire, and, almost from the outset, was important not only in itself but as shaping the country's general colonial policy. Unwelcome at first and not really arousing enthusiasm in France till the eighties, it was the testing-ground of French policies, and an experimental station in every field of activity,—general administration, economic policy, native problems, and even, because of the connection with a militant Islam, international problems in the period after 1870. So naturally, the country came to occupy an especial position : it was never a colony, and was never counted among the other colonies : even to-day this position remains and explains why it is practically impossible to obtain statistics covering the whole French Empire. Algeria has always been looked on as a prolongation of France, separated from France by a geographical accident of thirty hours of sea, but otherwise an integral portion of the mainland, and yet differentiated from a group of mainland *départements* by being a kind of laboratory for wider experiments unknown in France itself. The truth is that Algeria has always presented a case *sui generis* : it has not been a colony as the French view colonies, it is not a part of France under mainland conditions. Therefore it has aptly been called "a mixed colony," a colony half of settlement and half of *exploitation*, but with certain additional factors pertaining to neither of these types. But the best commentary on the anomalous situation of Algeria is that it is under the Minister of the Interior, yet has a distinct *tariff régime*. It is a piece of Islam thrust within the European orbit and looking, not towards the centre of Africa, but northwards, and with its difficulties partly lessened but mostly increased by its proximity to the French mainland. At the outset these confused characteristics best explain why Algeria's history has, for a century, been largely one of contradictions and futilities, with policies inapplicable to any colony and suicidal for a Moslem population. Algeria has been a synonym for confusion in French colonial annals, and, by reason of its

inordinate influence on colonial policy in general, has thus largely aided the anti-colonial cause.

The one fixed feature of the situation throughout the century has been geography, which was in no small degree the determinant of policy,—militarists on the spot and theorists in Paris notwithstanding. Algeria proper lies north of the desert, that is, north of the meridian through Biskra: south of that is the Sahara, the land of the raiding Touareg, geographically distinct. Algeria itself is a double ridge of mountains between the desert and the sea. The Maritime Atlas and the Saharan Atlas traverse the country laterally, and form a big double backbone. Between them is the plateau region of the Shott (the *Hauts Plateaux*), a steppe country too dry for agriculture and suitable only for scattered pasture, a forbidding land which is a fit portal of the desert. It is in the most northerly strip, the thin wedge of plain between the Maritime Atlas and the Mediterranean, that the wealth of the country lies and that settlement has always been concentrated, especially in the wealthy Mitijda region round Algiers itself. This coastal strip further subdivides into the provinces of Oran, Algiers, and Constantine, each of which has its distinct characteristics. Oran is the poor dry section next to Morocco, with inert natives more prone to the forces of religious suggestion than elsewhere, but with the compensation of adequate supplies of Spanish and Moroccan labourers. At the other extremity, on the Tunisian border, is Constantine, a high forested plateau-region, with a people industrious but, because of the ruggedness of their country, more warrior-like and more independent than elsewhere: consequently, this section is less suitable for outside colonization than the other two. Far more important than these two extremities is the central province, Algiers itself, for, just as the colony of Algeria narrows down to the northern fringe, so in turn the north, to all intents and purposes, becomes the central province of Algiers,—the region centring on the Mitijda plain, and the most densely settled part of Algeria. This is a land of exuberant vigneron and herders, with hard-working Kabyles further back, and further back still the harsh mountain tribes. But it is the black earth of the province that makes Algeria, and on this the occupation has focused from the first.<sup>1</sup>

Before 1870, Algeria had practically no record of success, as far as the French were concerned. The country was occupied during a fit of *ennui* when the Bourbon Government of Charles X attempted to distract the people's attention from maladministration at home, or more particularly the uninteresting boredom of that administration, by filling their eyes with the sight of glamorous foreign adventures in an exotic

<sup>1</sup> V. Baquet, *La Colonisation française dans l'Afrique du Nord* (1912), chap. 1.

Eastern setting. The famous *coup d'éventail*, the blow given the French Consul in Alger by the Dey, had little to do with the situation, because it was by no means an isolated or even the worst of similar incivilities : more to the point was the question of the conflict between the French Government and the Jewish banking-house of Bacri and Busnach, who were the veritable rulers of Algeria : and aiding this trend was the effect of Moorish piracy on Mediterranean trade.

A passing craze for *la gloire* and a permanent economic evil thus led France to Algeria<sup>2</sup> ; but, once there, she wanted to leave, and vacillated for decades. Only the Midi deputies (the commercialists) and the strategists wanted to remain, and even these were not concerned with the occupation of the interior of the land. Indeed, until 1840, it was not the pseudo-expansionists so much as the agrarians, the successors of the Physiocrats and localists to the core, who decided the destiny of Algeria, and who were supported by the serried ranks of the economists under Passy.<sup>3</sup> It is true that the decision of a Commission of Inquiry in 1834 resulted in the maintenance of the conquest, but only half-heartedly. What Algeria meant to the mass of French statesmen was a perpetual war with Abd-el-Kader for an ultimate victory which would aid nothing except French prestige, and that only to a dubious extent : economically, there was nothing to hope for, for was it not known that the only plentiful thing in this desert was air, and even that foul ?<sup>4</sup>

Under these conditions, the surprising feature is, not that it took France thirty years to get to Kabylie, but that she ever got there at all. Until 1847, Abd-el-Kader was in revolt : his defeat gave France the Tell plains and the Algerian plateaux, but Kabylie, the mountain-land guarding the interior, was not occupied till 1857, and even then, there had been little consolidation of the occupied area and not the slightest economic advance. For thirty years the efforts of the French in Algeria had been limited to a barren use of force ; and, to 1869, the land had cost the lives of 150,000 soldiers and an equal number of colonists, and there was little to show for the wastage.<sup>5</sup>

In the interim the bright spot was Bugeaud's command (1841-1847), a period which was fruitful in colonization experiments. *Père Bugeaud*, the *Petit Caporal* of Algeria, was a curious blend of farmer and soldier,

<sup>2</sup> For detailed analysis of these events, see Esquer, *Les Commencements d'un Empire. La Prise d'Alger* (1923), p. 66 et seq., or C. Rousset, *Conquête d'Alger* (1879), p. 30 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> R. Valet, *L'Afrique du Nord devant le Parlement au XX<sup>me</sup> Siècle* (1926), pp. 18-23.

<sup>4</sup> For details of this opposition, see C. Rousset, *Les Commencements d'une Conquête : L'Algérie de 1830 à 1840* (1887), Vol. I, p. 162 et seq.

<sup>5</sup> Ferry Report (*Le Gouvernement de l'Algérie*), 1892, p. 400.



with the instincts of a practical Périgord agriculturist and a weapon of 100,000 soldiers. These two assets he strove to combine in the form of "military colonization," but, because his military training led him to over-emphasize the influence of force, and because his Périgord days had bred in him a definite mistrust of outside capital, the scheme failed; and the credit of three million francs which he demanded in 1847 was abruptly refused.<sup>6</sup> However, he made the first genuine attempt to solve the problem of Algerian settlement, and his experiments were of evolutionary importance, not only because of the lessons from their failure, but because the positive benefits of the scheme played a large part in shaping the trend of later policy. Moreover, his policy of co-operating with the Arabs was half a century in advance of his era and opened up new avenues of thought. But he was ruined by his somewhat mixed reputation, by his over-great self-confidence, and by his ultimate reversion to the force that he had at first stood out against. Bugeaud was at the parting of the ways: in a military age and with a military weapon, he attempted to introduce economic and native reforms, suitable for a progressive civil government; and, not unnaturally, he fell between his weapons and his goals. He was attempting an impossible task, but the very attempt shortened the period of transition to that stage in which the reforms that he fought for would be made practicable. Modern Algeria owes no little of its development to *Père Bugeaud*, and it is no exaggeration to say that he was as successful in determining ultimate policy as he was a failure in his immediate task. Moreover, at the very least, he achieved the conquest of the land up to the mountains of Kabylie.

After Bugeaud, the only unconventional spot in Algeria's history was Napoleon III's dabbling with the idea of an "Arab Kingdom." When his policy of exploiting the natives had become irksomely monotonous, he issued his famous letter of February 6, 1863, to Governor Pélissier,<sup>7</sup> to the effect that "Algeria is not, properly speaking, a colony, but an Arab Kingdom," and, as such, had to evolve along the line of native hegemony. Therefore, he turned from aiding the colonists (of what use were colonists, it was argued, when most of them died?) to restoring the Arabs to a fair position. *Cantonement*, or the forcing-back of the natives to provide land for settlement, was abandoned, and the collective property of the Arabs recognized and divided among the numerous family groups (1863).

However, the upshot was failure. Napoleon, entranced for the

<sup>6</sup> H. Ideville, *Le Maréchal Bugeaud*, Vol. III, *passim*.

<sup>7</sup> There were two such letters, the first and more famous to Pélissier, "Lettre sur la politique française en Algérie" of 6/2/63, on government; and the second, that of 20/6/65 to Marshal MacMahon, on justice.

nonce by the Arabs, had neglected the far more useful Kabylie mountaineers as rude peasants, and the natives, fiery democratic agriculturists as they were, responded to this treatment by the rising of 1864 in Oran and Kabylie. Locusts in 1866, drought in 1867, and cholera in 1868 completed the cycle of disaster; but Napoleon's interest had waned long before this; and Algeria drifted, with a discouraged settler-class, a declining native population, a clearly inadequate military government, and economic distress everywhere,—in short, a palpable failure. So obvious was the *débâcle* that the *Corps Législatif* sent a Commission of Inquiry in 1869, which recommended a complete change of methods and organization, and in particular a return to that civil government which had been tried between 1858 and 1860.<sup>8</sup> This change came about in May, 1870, so that the decisive step in Algerian reorganization had been taken *before* the proclamation of the French Republic, and it is therefore completely erroneous (although usual) to attribute the commencement of modern Algeria to the revolution of 1870. The disease had been investigated, the symptoms diagnosed, and the prescription decided upon, before that event.

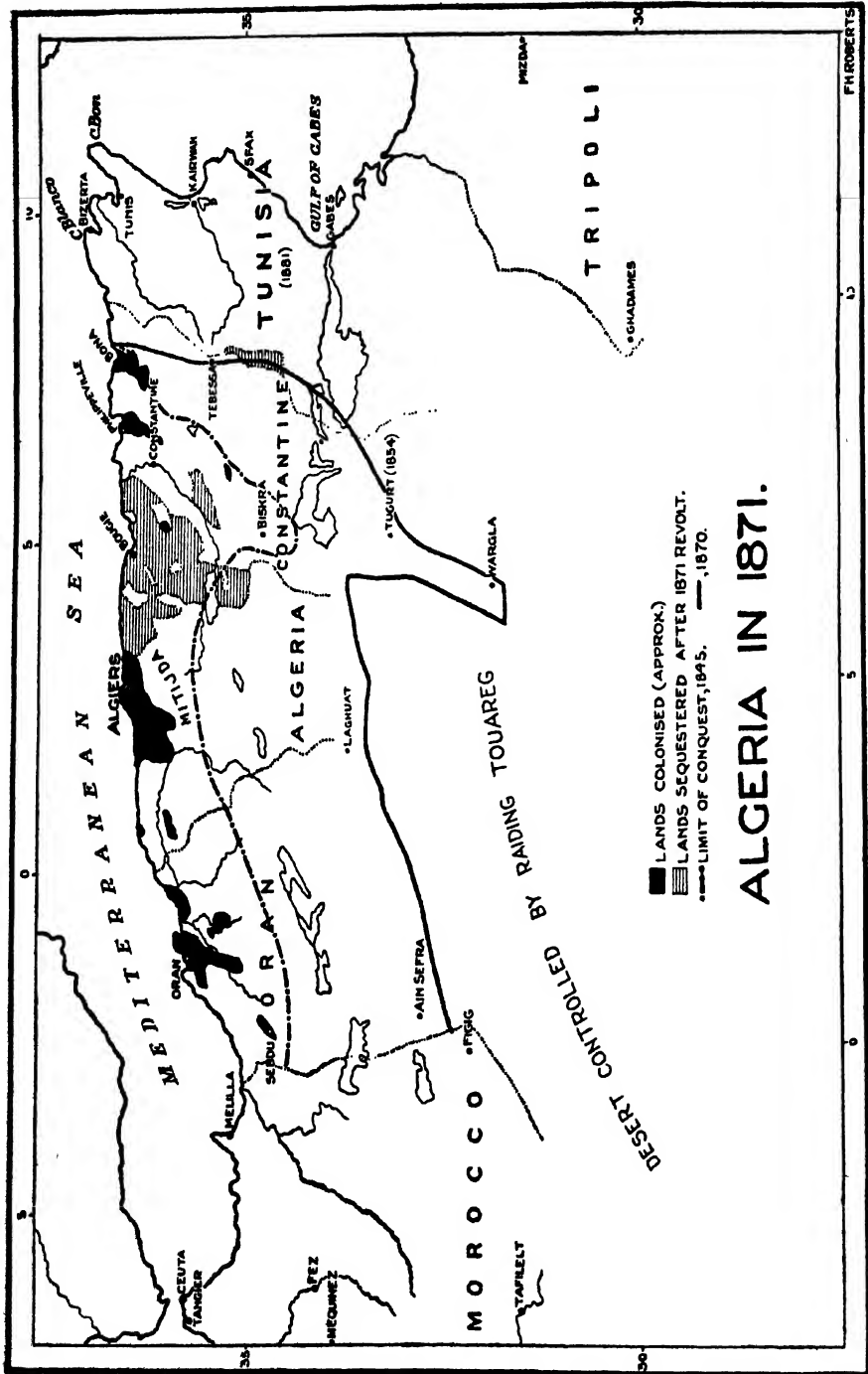
Nevertheless, in 1871, the Republic had to face the accumulated arrears of forty years of failure in Algeria, and in particular a seething native population. "The complications of our policy threw them out of their ordinary round, the liberty of our ideas scandalized them, and the spectacle of our civilization provoked in them a kind of *malaise*, and less admiration than defiant stupor."<sup>9</sup> Accordingly, an organized and powerful rising broke out in Algiers and Constantine in 1871, and evoked an instant response in the perennial storm-centre of the Kabylie mountains; and the point was that, unlike previous rebellions, this one was a rising of discontented natives rather than a religious movement.<sup>10</sup> It was a protest against the French Government rather than the unbeliever, and incidentally a dramatic spotlight on France's chief obstacle in Algeria—the presence of two million Arabs and Berbers, fighting fanatics all, who simply awaited favourable opportunities like the defeat of France in 1870 to raise the green banner of the *Jehad*. In addition, in 1870, there was the resentment of the Moslems at the ill-advised enfranchisement of the 47,000 Jews *en masse*,<sup>11</sup> and, at the same time, a removal of the link between Government and natives by the forcing-back of the *Bureaux-Arabs*,—the military intelligence officers who were

<sup>8</sup> A. Béhic, *Rapport de la Commission instituée par décision impériale du 5/5/69*, published separately.

<sup>9</sup> L. Rinn, *Histoire de l'Insurrection de 1871* (1891).

<sup>10</sup> M. Wahl, *L'Algérie* (3rd edition, 1879), p. 287.

<sup>11</sup> Cohen, *Les Israélites de l'Algérie et le décret Crémieux* (1900). For connection with the revolt of 1871, see pamphlet of Forest in that year.



- LANDS COLONISED (APPROX.)
- ▨ LANDS SEIZED AFTER 1871 REVOLT.
- - - - - LIMIT OF CONQUEST, 1845. ———, 1870.

## ALGERIA IN 1871.

the pick of France's colonial *personnel* and who at least personified the Government and made it intimate to ~~the~~ natives. Instead of these sympathetic *liaison*-officers, who understood the natives to some degree, Algeria was ruled by a civil Government which wished to reverse previous policy, and which seized the pretext of the rebellion to sequester 400,000 hectares of the best land in Algeria,—practically all the fertile region between Algiers and Constantine. The dispossessed natives (and it must be remembered that, though the rebels numbered only a third of the total population at most, all had to pay the recompense) simply had to go back: *refoulement* was the catchword of the day, and "we shall forget their existence" the policy of the French administrators.<sup>12</sup>

The emphasis was once again entirely upon the European settler. Military rule had given place to civil, in name in 1870 and in reality in 1879: the National Assembly in 1871 had given 100,000 hectares to Alsatians and Lorrainers: and "official colonization" was at its zenith soon after. France was concentrating on the effort of proving that the failure of settlement before 1870 was due to transient conditions and not to the country itself, and that the lugubriousness expressed in the view that "the cemeteries are the only colonies that continually prosper in Algeria" was opposed to the facts of the situation. Indeed, it was manifestly untrue after 1856, in which year the death-rate was for the first time exceeded by the birth-rate; and even in 1860, that is, immediately after the period of suffering, there were 205,000 Europeans in Algeria. By 1880, the number had increased to 376,000, and the agricultural revolution—a change due to the introduction of roads, markets, capital, and settlers—was in full swing. The natives still remained inert and disgruntled (witness the insurrections of 1876 and 1879, and the far more serious rising in Oran from 1881 to 1884); but the country was progressing, and for the first time the French were receiving some reward for their efforts.

Indeed, the year 1879–1880, when civil government really came to the Tell, may be taken as the turning-point in the modern history of Algeria, because then the spirit of optimism appeared, and the future, from most points of view, was no longer crushingly oppressive, despite the accumulated heritage of inapplicable policies which the Government of the *Défense Nationale* had bequeathed to the Republic,—the freeing of the Jews, the policy of assimilation, the *rattachement* idea of rule from Paris, and the native policy based on a refined economic exploitation. Up to this turning-point of 1880, Algerian history had been, so to speak, unilateral and undifferentiated: it was a melancholy record either of

<sup>12</sup> V. Piquet (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 49; L. Vignon, *La France dans l'Afrique du Nord* (2nd edition, 1888), p. 39 and note. See map for actual sequestrations.

complete failure or chequered efforts : but hereafter the consolidation was so obvious and the progress so unmistakable that the history of the land became diversified. There was no longer simply "an Algerian policy," but several policies in various spheres. The protoplasm, which had been quiescent until 1860 and fitfully growing from 1860 to 1880, had commenced a development in all directions,—a development which was far from unhindered or even uniform, but which was at least persistent and vigorous, even in time of failure.

After 1880, that is, the history of Algeria must be considered sectionally, and the lessons of the various sections correlated in a kind of counting-house before the general policy can be determined. The period of genesis,—an unusually protracted and sterile period,—was at an end, and that of realization at hand. Nor could it be said that France lacked negative evidence, the evidence of repeated failure, on which to decide her future policies. Hereafter, she had to gamble on the destiny of Algeria, with a credit balance of 200,000 settlers and a steadily growing trade, but a mortgage of an immutably alienated native stock, and the inapplicable policy of assimilation in every branch. The issue was thus uncertain enough, but wherein it differed from the past was that it at least allowed a permanently favourable outcome to be envisaged.

## II. Administration

For long, the problem that attracted most attention in Algeria was that of administration. Indeed, the prevalent colonial philosophy being as universal as it was, it was the problem that not only concerned the *minutiae* of Algerian government, but decided every other branch of activity, and even the general French policy to be applied to colonies as far apart as the Senegal and the Red River. In a word, the conflict between assimilation and decentralization in Algeria was the touchstone, the determinant, of the entire colonial system of France in the eighties and nineties of last century.

The issue was a simple one at basis. There was no question of self-government at all,—no thought that the French colonies should follow the English in going from oligarchic to representative and then to responsible government. It was simply whether Algeria should be controlled from Paris and on exclusively French models, or by officials in Algiers and on lines suitable to the peculiar local conditions. In other words, it was whether the colonial policy of France (and it must always be remembered that this included economic as well as governmental activities) was to be centripetal or centrifugal. The emergency Government of 1871 had no doubts on the matter. Given the implications of their Republican *coup*, viz., that Parisian democracy represented the

apex of civilization and the triumph of the most orthodox Rousseau philosophy, assimilation was a foregone conclusion. If this system were justified at all, then it was justified everywhere, for exceptions would in reality be attacks upon its basic principles. There could be no just exception to a policy determined by the principles of liberty and equality : to accept the contrary would be to deny the rule of reason and logic. The ideas and the organization of the third French Republic were of universal application,—the situation was so simple as to admit of no cavil.

Hence, until the time of Jules Cambon in 1896, assimilation held undisputed sway in Algeria. In 1870, the idea was popular even in the colony, both because it was associated with the Republican cause and because it marked a reaction against the uncertainty of Napoleon III's time and a newer *rapprochement* between Paris and settlers. Thus, the seventies saw no voices raised against it : indeed, until the appointment of Governor-General Grévy in 1870, interest was centred on the struggle between civil and military, the issue being for long in doubt. Decrees of March and August, 1881, however, postulated a new situation, for they introduced the idea of *rattachements*.<sup>13</sup> This simply meant a dyarchy, with the mass of the departments directly attached to Paris *bureaux* and in no sense responsible to the Governor-General of Algeria. As a corollary, the Governor-General became largely a powerless nonentity, with control only over the unimportant departments. All essential services—and this in a young colony where prompt and decisive action was needed for any policy to be effective—were managed in Paris, independently of him, and he was simply a residuary Governor, and not a Governor-General at all. Algeria thus came under direct parliamentary control, or rather under the feudalistic bureaucracy of the Paris *bureaux* which stand behind parliament : local conditions were subordinated to the needs of parties in France and to the inflexible rules of a permanent Government department, and there were all the frictions inevitable in a system of divided control, and especially of control from a distance. Algeria thus suffered from her proximity to Paris, and the system of 1881 naturally came to mean slowness, inefficiency, inapplicable measures, irresponsibility, and even a premium on corruption. The Governor-General was a *fainéant*, and control from Paris inadequate in essential matters and over-meticulous and exasperating in impractical minor policies.<sup>14</sup> Under Tirman in particular (1881–1891), government simply retrogressed, because of the impossibility of a concerted move in advance : with an emphasis on disruption, co-operation was out of the question, and,

<sup>13</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 27/8/81, 6/9/81.

<sup>14</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Nov., 1900, p. 358.

with control from Paris, energy on the part of individuals in Algeria meant only to be cashiered. As Wahl, in the standard exposition of Algerian policy, summed the matter up, "this unhappy centralization placed Algerian affairs at the mercy of parliamentary influences, of the incompetence of Paris *bureaux*, and the harassing of rival administrations. Power and responsibility were so scattered as to be nowhere."<sup>15</sup> Indeed, responsibility could not be sheeted home under such a disjointed policy, and Algeria drifted in an administrative paralysis, the disease in one part of the body inevitably influencing the rest.

But, as the whole colonial system was deemed to be at stake, reform was very difficult. In separate commissions of inquiry, the parliamentary reformers, Ferry and Burdeau and Jonnart, rivals as they were in most matters, showed the dangers of assimilation and excessive centralization: and so obvious had the failure been in political and native and economic organization that the general principle of *rattachements* was reversed in a decree of December, 1896.<sup>16</sup>

This decision, hardly contested as it was, marked the definite sanctioning of the principle that each colony was an entity, with local interests of its own, independently of those of France,—a concept hitherto unknown in French colonization. It did not envisage anything in the nature of the English autonomy or self-government: it simply meant the development by French officials as before, but in the new direction of the colony's own interests. It was the recognition, not of self-government, but of decentralization and development along local lines. However, Jules Cambon, whose attacks on *rattachements* after 1891 did much to provoke the final decision, went further, and definitely linked a policy of self-government on to decentralization. He wanted to set up a representative body and give it financial rights, especially the power of voting its own budget. But this was far from being countenanced by the reformers of 1896, who had not even reached the stage of representative government, to say nothing of responsible government, but who nevertheless were building better than they knew in opening the floodgates of reform. That is why the financial reforms of 1900 followed so precipitately on the political changes of 1896, despite the ban on future innovations in that year.

The political advance achieved, the struggle was transferred to the economic sphere, for the Algerian settlers, numbering 200,000 by 1899, were demanding not so much political rights, as some power of financial

<sup>15</sup> Wahl (1897), *op. cit.*, p. 256, and especially Jules Cambon, *Le Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie* (1918), p. 13 *et seq.*

<sup>16</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Senate, 31/5/93; Deps., 11/11/96. Cp. article in *L'Afrique Française*, Nov., 1900, p. 367.

control. Until 1900, every detail of the Algerian financial system was decided in Paris, and there was no method by which the colonists could even express their views. Naturally, to modify any fiscal arrangement ordained by Paris was beyond the scope of imagination. The centralizing tendency was dying hard, and seemed especially virile so far as money matters were concerned. Apart from their three senators and six deputies in the French Parliament, the Algerian settlers were really governed by a bureaucracy and had no rights. In August, 1898, however, largely as a result of the change two years previously (but in no wise contemplated at the time), a means of consultation was provided by the institution of the Financial Delegations (*Délégations Financières*), a kind of embryonic legislative body, nominated in panels or distinct sections so as to represent interests and not individuals. There were sections for the Government, for the European settlers, and for the natives; and the joint body, which was quite powerless beyond expression of opinion, was supposed to be a barometer, so to speak, to gauge the repercussion of financial policies on the various sections affected. It was a sop to popular agitation and, at the same time, a useful and ingenious method of estimating public opinion, while ostensibly a concession of liberalism.<sup>17</sup>

But the centralizing instinct was still strong and would almost certainly have triumphed, had not further reforms been practically wrested from an unwilling giver by a fortuitous combination of circumstances. In the first place, the bitterness of the anti-Semite crisis in Algeria in the late nineties, a bitterness which found expression in riots on so extensive a scale as to be almost incipient civil war, showed the need, or the absolute necessity, of giving the colonists other interests and other means of expression than racial antipathies. Some concession was inevitable, if civil order was to be maintained in the land. The country was seething with discontent and with a vague sense of repressed and thwarted desires: adolescent, the community was restricted to the privileges of infancy, and its vigour was finding expression in unhealthy perversions. To this obvious need of some concessions was added the influence of Waldeck-Rousseau, the Premier of France from 1899 to 1902, and always an adherent of collaboration, alike in general and native and economic policy: and he was aided by the firmness of Governor-General Jonnart and of Berthelot, the budget-reporter. The result was the wresting from Parliament of the epoch-marking law of December 19,

<sup>17</sup> This ground is covered in Mallarmé, *L'Organisation Gouvernementale de l'Algérie* (1901). Good articles are in *Revue du Droit Public*, 1899, 2nd half, p. 52. It also set up a *Conseil Supérieur de Gouvernement*,—a mixed Council, with various representatives on an official basis. It is a kind of Algerian Upper Chamber, and since 1900, has had limited budgetary rights.



1900,<sup>18</sup> giving Algeria (and thus inferentially the other colonies, when they became worthy of it) a complete financial autonomy,—a budget of her own and practically a complete control over the so-called “ optional ” sections.<sup>19</sup>

The principle was keenly, almost bitterly, contested. It had long been a goal of reformers,—of Marshal Randon in 1854, of Governor-General Péliissier in 1861, and of Béhic's famous report of 1869, but, despite the support of Governors-General Tirman and Cambon after 1881, the idea was rejected as long as Burdeau, a determined opponent who threw his burly form directly athwart the reform movement, remained the arbiter of French finances. The Brisson Cabinet proposed a special budget in 1894, but fell, although, from this time onwards, the proposal came to be supported by a strong section who, knowing little and caring less about Algeria, wanted to lessen France's financial responsibilities there. By a paradox not unusual in France, a measure to develop the colonies was aided by sections which were anti-colonial, but which deemed the reforms advantageous from the point of view of metropolitan finance. Viviani, for instance, declared in 1899 that Algeria should borrow her own money and pay for her own development, and therefore had to have a separate budget and civil personality. The country was definitely opposed to increasing its payments for Algeria, because it was doubtful of the results achieved for the 1,902 million francs spent to December, 1890.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, as the annual expenses, even in 1900, were more than the receipts, France, it was argued, could not lose by transferring the responsibility to the colony. It was this thought that decided the favourable vote of 1900, so that the concession of financial autonomy to Algeria, landmark in colonial history though it was, must be attributed hardly at all to a more enlightened spirit of colonial policy, and almost entirely to a desire to evade further, and even existing, colonial responsibilities. France was simply making the best of a bad job, and trusting, though to judge from the debates of 1899–1900 not too confidently, that the colony would be able to straighten out its unfavourable financial position. But of liberalism, and a progressive spirit, and a belief in decentralization and even fair play, there was little or none. The reform was a concession to circumstances and

<sup>18</sup> For passage of this law, see *Journal Officiel*, Deps., sess. ord., 17/5/99, 15/12/99, 23/5/00, 20/12/00. For the general position, see the Clamageran Report (Senatorial Commission of 1892) in *Journal Officiel*, Senate, sess. ext., 1892, docts. parl., p. 518. The report on the actual *projet de loi* is in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., sess. ord., 1900, docts. parl., p. 1708.

<sup>19</sup> Against these, and completely under the executive control, were the “ obligatory ” sections,—those necessary to ensure the continuity of administration.

<sup>20</sup> Burdeau Report (*L'Algérie en 1891*), p. 3. To end of 1890.

practically an evasion of duty. Perhaps the best commentary on French colonial morality was that this point of view was openly expressed and that the anti-colonials largely favoured the measure!

The new arrangement was that France was to continue paying the military expenses and to guarantee the payment of interest for the railway loans, but there her responsibility for Algeria's finance stopped. The colony had to pay all the expenses of civil administration, but in return received the proceeds of all taxes. In the case of deficits, it could borrow, as the law of 1900 gave it a civil personality and thus the power of contracting loans. France had largely withdrawn from the financial world of Algeria, and it was a genuine financial autonomy that had been conceded. Even the right of veto was limited in practice, for the Governor-General and the Government prepared the local budget and the local assemblies voted on the whole and controlled part, the only customary intervention of the French Council of State and Parliament being to pass the optional part as a whole.<sup>21</sup> The Chambers usually confine their attention to the obligatory sections, thus adhering to the original idea that the Budget was to be a piece-work affair, each body having its own share, with a minimum of conflict.

When it is remembered that political representation was practically unknown in Algeria at this time, the significance of these financial reforms will readily be grasped. Indeed, this brings us at once to one of the fundamental differences between English and French procedure. In the English colonies, political reforms invariably preceded economic, and the ordinary development was from government by officials and control from England, to representative, and gradually to responsible government,—that is to that stage in which the colony had control over its own finances. But France knew nothing of this gradual development, and, with her everywhere, the demand for reform meant economic privileges. The pressure of an overwhelming native or foreign majority in every colony reversed the ordinary procedure, and so to-day we find in the French colonies an effective economic self-government with practically no political self-administration. Instead of political bodies or miniature Parliaments evolving in the colonies, there arose bodies like the *Délégations Financières* of Algeria,—financial advisers representing the various *blocs* of interests, and not concerned with purely political matters. Even the Tunisian council-scheme of 1922 is on this analogy.

Nor can one argue from the British analogy in connection with the actual text of the reforms of 1900, for, taking into account the predominance of officials appointed from Paris and the need for an affirmation of each project by the Paris Ministry, it could be argued that this simply

<sup>21</sup> Périnquey, *L'Autonomie Financière de l'Algérie* (1904), for details.

represented the state, say, of Australia under the early naval governors, before even the legislative council of 1823 was arranged for. But this is not so, both because the letter of the arrangement allowed a real autonomy impossible in the Australian case, and because this tendency was further accentuated in practice. The officials in Algeria, especially from Tirman's time, were curiously associated with the colony and, largely because of their objection to the idea of *rattachement*, were its spokesmen as against Paris, and not merely *liaison*-officers or mouth-pieces to disseminate official views. Then, too, the right of veto was practically a form and stillborn. In practice, Algeria came to have a true autonomy over four-fifths of the budget; and it was the demographical position of the country and the traditions of French colonial policy that allowed this to exist without a corresponding degree of political enfranchisement, and seemed to limit it in point of law. The self-control was practically unquestioned, and Algeria, so far as finance went, was in the position of Australia in 1843 rather than Australia in 1815, but without any corresponding development of political self-government. Nothing could better demonstrate the curiosities of French organization than that the one could exist apart from the other.<sup>22</sup>

It is difficult to analyse the results of autonomy on Algerian finance, as the position was so involved both before and after the granting of the privilege. Before 1900, the one obvious fact was the permanent deficit,—that for 1900 alone being over 86 million francs, and the accumulated total since 1830 close on five milliards! Every year France had to give a credit to Algeria even to balance the civil budget, and it was clear that either the productiveness of the country or the method of taxation was inadequate.<sup>23</sup> To confuse the situation still further, the official publications of Algeria purported to make out a profit each year, even in the nineties, whereas those published in Paris revealed a marked and permanent deficit! Even Leroy-Beaulieu, a moderate, referred to Algeria's finances as "a mystery pure and simple," and nobody could unravel the crossed threads.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, it was clear that the country's finances were not in a sound state.

This analysis applies equally to the situation after 1900 as to that before it. Officially, the budget-reports showed an instant and increasing surplus, but the very suddenness of this economic transformation was sufficient to arouse scepticism. The first special budget of 1901 showed a credit of one million francs, the second two million, and so on, until the

<sup>22</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, July, 1901, p. 227, for usurpation of functions even in the first local budget.

<sup>23</sup> Burdeau Report (1892), p. 2; Ferry Report (1890), p. 397.

<sup>24</sup> P. Leroy-Beaulieu, *L'Algérie et la Tunisie* (1887), pp. 192-195. He referred specifically to "pretended surpluses."

accumulated profits reached 52 million francs by 1907,—wonderful results for a period of beginnings and bad years<sup>14</sup> and partial failures. But a closer analysis shows that this result was reached only by transferring certain "extraordinary expenses" to the metropolis and by counting loans as receipts! The position was favourable only because the unprofitable expenses were charged to France, and because the colony, after narrowly limiting the scope of civil government, was allowed to keep the profits in those spheres.

Algeria was really not shouldering her own responsibilities, and taxation was inadequate. In 1910, for instance, the resident of France paid two-thirds as many taxes again as the French resident of Algeria; and such taxes as there were were unevenly distributed, for there were no direct taxes save on property and business, and rich colonists paid scarcely anything.<sup>15</sup> So that, given the economic progress of the intervening decade, it is dubious if the cession of financial autonomy to Algeria was beneficial to France: on the other hand, it certainly helped the colonist, but at the expense of the metropolitan taxpayer and the later generations of Algerian settlers. The whole position, in fact, had something anomalous about it,—that France, notoriously stringent in her colonial régime, should allow the privilege of 1900 so to develop as to spell immunity for the settler from his just burdens, and an increasing financial load being thrown on France, without any recompense. The Algerian development was unhealthy for all concerned, and, taking all factors into account, the expenses of Algeria in 1910 were at least double the receipts, artificial budget-balances notwithstanding. On the other hand, the apparent financial prosperity provided a general optimistic background for administration and development in other directions, especially in facilitating State loans; and this largely accounts for the ebullience in Algerian affairs after 1900. Algeria, having achieved, and from her own lights having justified, financial autonomy, felt free to develop in other directions, and even to turn to the *bête noire* of Algerian affairs,—native policy.

### III. Native Policy

Here we come to the most troublesome, and certainly the least successful, phase of Algerian history. The history of the colony has always been dominated by the presence of two million virile and passively hostile natives, embittered by the mistaken policies of the past, and hating France with the accumulated hatred of four generations, stiffened by religious fanaticism. France makes no secret of the breakdown of her

<sup>14</sup> R. Aynard, *L'Œuvre française en Algérie* (1912), pp. 107–108. For position see Coehery's budget-speech in *Journal Officiel*, doct. parl., 1909, Vol. I, p. 114.

native policy in Algeria and admits that it was her fundamental error. Algeria has always been the testing-ground for the idiosyncrasies of French theorists in this matter, and, for long, the policy was determined by anything except the facts of the situation.

To start with, the native problem in Algeria was singularly complex, even granting the knowledge we have to-day. But with practical knowledge limited, and with a policy shaped for that non-existent person, "the Algerian native," confusion and failure were inevitable: and the policy of "blundering through" in the case of a sensitive native population means failure. France postulated a uniform "native" in Algeria, an "Arab," sometimes viewed as Saint-Pierre's *Virginie*, but more often as a kind of land prototype of the Moorish pirates of the Dey's time, and as a person to be ruthlessly driven back. As Vignon wrote in 1888, the natives were "the original vice" of Algeria; and the average administrator, both before and after that date, gave this an individual as well as a general interpretation. The French view-point was negative and antagonistic from the outset: hence the neglect of actual conditions, and the policies of *refoulement*.<sup>26</sup>

It was a long time before there was anything like an ethnological survey of the situation in Algeria, and certainly, till the close of the nineteenth century, France suffered because of this lack. It was dimly realized by 1870 that there was a distinct cleavage between Arabs and Berbers, but this was not held to be sufficient to cause different policies for the two sections. By 1900, however, it was clear that the fundamental feature in the native problem, or rather the native problems, of Algeria was the distinction between the two races, which were opposite in almost every respect, and each of which hated and despised the other.

The Berbers are the mountaineers, the descendants of the pre-Mohammedan populations and the real autochthones of the country. They are essentially mountain-dwellers, and as such are strongest in Kabylie, the Aurès, and Mزاب. They are a mixed race, like the South Europeans in physique: indeed, thousands of them are scarcely distinguishable from Auvergnats or Limousins, and, in temperament as well as bodily, they are the Corsicans of North Africa. Their organization is individualistic and largely democratic: prior to 1871 everything was decided in the *Djemaa* or communal assembly; and Kabylie organization was in reality based on a *régime* of patriarchal landowners.<sup>27</sup> The Kabyles, being agriculturists, were keen individualists, and always had an eye on material progress; that is why, at certain seasons, they provide the peripatetic labour-supply of Algeria, as many as twenty thousand of

<sup>26</sup> A good account is in Vignon (1888), *op. cit.*, p. 236 on.

<sup>27</sup> Hanoteaux et Letourneux, *La Kabylie et les Coutumes Kabyles* (1893), Vol. I.

them temporarily migrating from some communes. For the rest, they resist the foreign penetration of their mountains, and are distinctly localists. "They are not a people," it has been said, "but a mosaic of small democratic groups, of very diverse origins, and often divided by ferocious hatreds."<sup>28</sup> All in all, although their supposed primitive virtues and the extent of their democracy have probably been exaggerated, they were fighting freemen of the hills, organized in small communities of individualists, and with no omnipotent central organizations. Finally, they have, in their aversion to everything foreign, reserved a special hatred and contempt for the Arabs who usurped their land in the ninth century and enforced the word of the Prophet—and thus they remained a dissident *bloc* when France tried to organize all of Algeria on an Islamic basis.

The so-called Arabs in Algeria are not really Arabs at all: their only unifying features are the Mohammedan religion and the fact they are all non-Berbers. In all of North Africa, the word "Arab" refers more to culture than to blood, for Arab blood is very limited: Arabs and Turks and Moors and negroes have all mixed, the result being the "Algerian Arab" of to-day—a nondescript ethnic type. That is what is meant when it is said that the Arab is "a social type rather than an ethnic element"<sup>29</sup>: the only real significance of the word is in implying a social and political system based on the Islamic religion. Numerically only about a fourth of the population, the mixed Arabs predominate in so far as culture and organization are concerned, because, since the eighth century, they have forced their ideas on the other ethnic elements.

They are nomad pastoralists, with a social polity based on the family or tribe. Organization is frankly feudal, the emphasis being on the ruler, and not, as with the Berber, on the individuals. All control is centralized in the group-heads: the *Sheikh* administers the *douars* or tent-circles, the *Caid* the tribe, and the *Agha* the group of tribes, and they are practically absolute potentates. Arab organization rests on centralization and authority, and, just as the father is supreme in the family, so the group-leader is supreme in the group. The Arab thus has less independence and individuality than the Berber: Arab men are less energetic and progressive, Arab women less free.

But it is Mohammedanism, at once a system of law and government as well as a religion, that is at the basis of Arab affairs. This fighting religion binds the Touareg of the desert and the Atlas troglodytes and

<sup>28</sup> H. Lorin, *L'Afrique du Nord* (1908), p. 129.

<sup>29</sup> E. Doutté, *L'Islam algérien en 1900*. Doutté revealed Moslem organization to France the most clearly. A good short account is in Aynard (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 41 *et seq.*

the Europeanized Arab traders of the towns : and, because it correlates political and economic matters with religious sources, imposes an almost impassable barrier in the way of reform. To attack Arab economic organization means attacking some obscurely connected phase of Islam, and to stir up this means the Holy War, for the Mohammedan exists only to fight for his religion. El Bokhari's cry of so many centuries ago has lost none of its appeal through the ages : " I would wish to be killed in the Holy War, then to be recalled to life and killed again, then again recalled to life and again killed ! " <sup>30</sup> What could a foreign Unbeliever do in the way of reform under such conditions, when the natives were simply seeking for pretexts to raise the banner of militant Islam ? Mohammedanism literally surrounds the whole of Arab organization, in every sphere, with a wall-fence, to cross which means a constant danger, a certainty almost, of a fanatical explosion. In addition, to keep the emotional *furor* always simmering, there are the wandering *marabouts* or agents of the thirty religious fraternities in Algeria, who have been largely responsible for each of the risings in the land, especially for the South Oran outbreak of 1881. <sup>31</sup> Certainly, the influence of localism counteracts this to some degree, but, even discounting this, the religious nature of Arab society in Algeria presents the most complicated problem in the land, and, by its nature, is insoluble, save in the direction of absolute abstention, a position impossible if the land is to progress. It is because the roots of Islam go so far and twine round every part of the Algerian tree, like the sycophant sarsaparilla round a gum-trunk, that the problem becomes insoluble, and a matter insignificant in itself is transformed into a moral issue sufficient to stir up a *Jehad*.

In the desert, that is, beyond Biskra and the Atlas, the native problem assumes a still different form, because of the difficulty of effective supervision in this land of enormous spaces. There are 60,000 Arabs round the northern oases, but (and these latter afford the problem) an indefinite number of nomad Touareg roaming round the desert and living primarily for pillage. The oases-dwellers are to some extent democratic in their organization, like the Berbers, but grafted on to this idea is a use of slave and serf classes, domestic slaves being easily obtainable from the great caravan-routes leading into the interior : on the other hand, the camel-raiders, the nomads proper, are aristocratic in their organization, and having nothing in common with their more prosaic semi-sedentary fellows. Both, however, unite in affording a difficult problem to the

<sup>30</sup> El Bokhari (French edition), Vol. II, p. 284. His *Cahih* gives an excellent account of the fighting spirit of Islam. Op. Koran, *suras* 8, 47, 66.

<sup>31</sup> For these, see L. Rinn, *Marabouts et Khouan* (1884), or Vignon (1888), *op. cit.*, p. 210.

administrator, although to some extent the issue is simplified because there is practically no contact with Europeans, as there is with the Arabs and Berbers in the zone from the Atlas north.<sup>32</sup>

It is readily evident, therefore, that, even given a perfect knowledge and understanding of the situation (factors which were lacking), the various native problems of Algeria well nigh defy solution, and certainly appear insoluble in those regions where a *laissez-faire* policy is out of the question, and where native organization has to be modified to meet the demands of European penetration. In Algeria, such penetration naturally and inevitably meant disintegration and suffering and struggle: disguise the matter how one may, this is always the fundamental fact to which one comes back, and which shows how inevitably the record of early policy had to be largely one of failure. A compromise was out of the question: one side had to give way: and, however hardly they resisted, this had to be the natives. Consequently, North Africa was for some time a charnel-house of massacred natives, and then a region where the natives, either by force or a policy of attrition, were forced back, and ever back,—away from the Tell to the mountains, and still back towards the desert.

The first French policy was thus quite clear,—that of *refoulement*, the driving-back referred to above. The Europeans had to fight till Abdel-Kader's fall in 1847, even for a footing. Even then, fighting had to continue, because the mountains were as yet untouched, and because the settlers were convinced that their safety depended on a constant display of force. With an army of 50,000 to protect a European population of 425,000 (1850) set down in the midst of over two million sullen or openly disaffected natives, the mathematics of the situation seemed clear: and even Louis Vignon, a moderate reformer and one of the French colonial experts, held in 1888 that "moral conquest" and "penetration" were entirely out of the question, and that the *douars* of the Arabs had to withdraw to the desert as the villages of the colonists advanced. Go back or be forced back, was the policy; and it was not an exaggeration to say that stern measures were rather desired by the European, to point the moral of the logic. As a Commission of Inquiry reported in 1898 the issue was clear. "There is no longer any place in the Tell for anyone but the European or native peasant who tills the ground. If the Arab does not wish to become this peasant, then he is condemned to perish, he is committing suicide."<sup>33</sup> And every observer knew that the

<sup>32</sup> E. F. Gautier, *La Conquête du Sahara* (3rd edition, 1922), pp. 164-167.

<sup>33</sup> J. van Vollenhoven, *Essai sur le Fellah algérien* (1903), pp. 220-221. Full details of the position are in *Documents de l'Enquête de la Commission de Protection du Propriété indigène en Algérie*, 1898. For the general attitude, see L. Vignon, *Un Programme de Politique Coloniale* (1919), p. 189 et seq.



Arab would not, and, his notion of society and religion being what it was, could not, become a mere beast of burden for the settlers.

Therefore, they lost first their colonization land in the Tell, and then their forests or grazing lands, and came to drift in a helpless lethargy of pessimism, with their past uprooted, their present miserable, and their future bleak. The new method of agricultural production, the veritable agricultural revolution that was changing the face of the land, passed over them: and the changing facts combined with their psychology to produce an inertia of despair, fading off naturally into disaffection. Nor was the fault entirely that of the new-coming Europeans, because the Algerian Arab, idle by habit and instinct, and with a limited intelligence and a complete apathy, was content to indulge in a contemplative resignation, and would not adopt the new methods. They made little attempt at adaptation, or to grapple with the changing circumstances, but simply gave way; and, with the fatalism of their race, neglected to grasp by the forelock even that limited opportunity offered to them. Seeing no progress and convinced of the futility of efforts to improve their lot, they just withdrew, and, by the complaisance, deteriorated the very fibre of their being. So it comes about that the Director of the Algerian Bank can say, "they have nothing to present for credit, not even honesty." Fanaticism commenced, and a careless insouciance completed, the racial decline; and it was this nerveless creature who had taken the place of his fighting forbears in the regions of settlement, and it is this side of the picture which must be considered in estimating the balance sheet of French policy in Algeria. The Arab was by no means a despairing manly figure, overcome by brute force. On the other hand, this was no adequate explanation, and still less an excuse, for the French policy of *refoulement*, which was simply a harsh economic necessity, pursued regardless of the human suffering entailed.<sup>34</sup>

Whatever the cause or justification, the fact of suffering could not be denied. "Confiscation," "*cantonnement*," "*refoulement*,"—these were the terms used in the period before 1890, and naturally bred in the native mind a corresponding degree of disaffection. The repression of the revolts of 1871 and 1881–1884 were more stringent than the situations warranted, and the unduly large expropriations which followed merely confirmed the native impression that their interests did not count in the slightest. Everything combined to bring about this frame of mind,—the diseases and depopulation of the sixties, the revolts of the seventies and eighties, and the continued *refoulement* and confiscations; and, by the nineties, the tribes were undeniably disaffected in general.<sup>35</sup> Personal

<sup>34</sup> Van Vollenhoven, *op. cit.*, pp. 166, 182.

<sup>35</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Nov. 1891, pp. 5–6.

interest explained the attachment of those in the coastal zone, but, as practically every observer of the situation (Burdeau and Ferry and Cambon and Wahl and Vignon) agreed, their reasoned conviction was one of ingrained and ineradicable hostility to the French. The French had reduced them to "a mere dust of men," said Ferry; and another authority summed the matter up by saying, "we have broken the foundations of native society without giving them a place in our own."<sup>28</sup> They rested, resentful and despairing, facing the onrushing French from the desert fringe, and speaking of '64 and '67 and '71 and '82, yet without the initiative or power of duplicating those rebellions. They were rebels still, but conditions restricted them to passive instead of actual insurrection.

France had thus alienated the Arabs, the one bright spot being Bugeaud's native system which, set up in 1844, lasted till 1870 over the whole land, and even after that in South Algeria and elsewhere. This was the famous system of the *Bureaux Arabes*, by which each administrative *cercle* had a staff of trained intelligence-officers, whose work it was to secure a *rapprochement* with their native charges, and who, despite the policies of Paris and Algiers, succeeded in really coming into contact with native essentials and to some extent counteracting the inapplicable or spoliatory policies enforced by the general government. But, on the whole, their efforts were lessened by the wider policies, and, after 1870, they were confined to the southern desert. In this field, as elsewhere, Bugeaud's constructive work somehow failed to survive the forces of opposition, although there is no doubt that his system was as applicable as it was desirable, under the given circumstances.

#### LAND

The prevailing conflict between French and natives found its keenest expression in the land-question, as was inevitable in an entirely agricultural country. The two sets of interest were clearly opposed: the settlers wanted land, and saw only unprogressive natives in the way: opposite them were the Arabs and the Berbers, living for landowning, resolved to resist spoliation to the last, and (with the Arabs at least) having land communally held and linked with religion in their general scheme of things. At first, the French met the difficulty by dispersing the former State-lands (*Beyliks*) or the *habous*, religious lands which, regardless of the smouldering opposition of the Moslems, they had expropriated. Then there were the fruits of revolt, and it became practically a truism that a rising, once repressed, was a direct aid to the

<sup>28</sup> A. Bernard, in *L'Année Coloniale*, 1900, p. 13. Compare Wahl (1888), *op. cit.*, p. 32.

State. As Vignon naïvely summed up the matter: "Each revolt, in effect,—and they were numerous, as the repression of one was often the germ of another—served as a pretext for the confiscation of part or even all of the tribal lands. It was thus that the natives were driven back (*on refoula les indigènes*) in the three provinces, all of their best lands being taken for distribution among the colonists."<sup>37</sup> The French administrators had no hesitation in applauding such a line of conduct, for the exploitation of the natives was the theory in the ascendant. Rather inappropriately, a Commission for the Protection of Native Property reported in 1898 that "it is necessary above all to concentrate on the development of colonization and give to those Frenchmen who wish to colonize the means of buying land easily: the question of native property thus finds itself, if not scattered, at least relegated to second place." The Commission thus disposed of their difficulty by denying its existence: and this attitude was the fundamental assumption in dealing with the question of native lands. The relative emphasis on matters native and European could not be more succinctly or accurately expressed.

The root of the land-difficulty in Algeria was that property was largely communally held and indivisible, all matters relating to it being regulated by the religious law of the Koran. The natives therefore opposed any intervention by an outside secular Power, and, to complicate the matter, found it difficult to understand the idea of alienation in fee-simple.<sup>38</sup>

Facing this situation, France had either to stand aside, or adopt the long and difficult process of first defining, and then individualizing, and then alienating native lands,—a tedious and dangerous process, but one inevitable where hundreds of thousands of European settlers were concerned. The settlers who were dicing with destiny for success in a strange country demanded land in no uncertain terms, and could see (and they were perfectly logical in so far as they went) a good deal of unoccupied and unused land, held by lazy native owners who would neither improve it nor let others have its use. It was an age-old conflict of general principles, the tragedy being that both sides had perfectly logical arguments. Tradition and religion were arrayed against the imperious forces of economic necessity: land to the settler meant life, to the native the continuity of his tribe, and, what was even more important, earning the after-death reward of having done his duty. It was the entry of such intangible moral and religious issues that so complicated the problem: the overweening importance of land in every primitive community was here increased by the sacrosanct dictates of religion.

<sup>37</sup> Vignon (1888), *op. cit.*, p. 32.

<sup>38</sup> Pouyanne, *La Propriété Foncière en Algérie* (1900), p. 250 *et seq.*, for an analysis of this.

The diffusion of religion over the fields of civil life, here as elsewhere, produced numberless complications.

France's first policy, while somewhat harsh, was at least logical, and, to some degree, founded on a consideration of the various conflicting interests involved. Capitalists were prevented from fishing in the troubled waters of native land-titles by first being limited to transactions in the region open for colonization (1844), and then by being excluded from tribal lands everywhere (1851). The Government's warning was clear: in this difficult matter, the issues were not to be needlessly complicated by the intervention of private enterprise. Such policies as were determined upon were to have a fair chance of surviving on their own merits, and were not to be deleteriously affected by the actions of irresponsible individuals.

So far so good: the issue had been made a community one. But, if these "warning off" edicts prevented spoliation, they did not make for advance, and, to prevent economic inertia and to provide for the needs of the colonists who were coming to Algeria to make the "New France," the Government introduced the idea of *cantonnement*,—that is, restricting each tribe to the land actually needed for the sustenance of its members, and taking the rest to the State for settlement. Harsh as this may seem, it was yet a regulated compromise, and, while involving expropriation, allowed at least a moderate prosperity for all concerned. The natives were deprived of much of their lands, it is true, but they were allowed to live easily and to have enough of their patrimony safeguarded,—concessions which later policies, even the outwardly more liberal ones, failed to secure. Moreover, this partial expropriation for State purposes was a procedure which was intelligible to the natives, for it conformed to Moslem law. All in all, this policy which, from *a priori* reasoning, would seem to be but State-sanctioned spoliation, was probably the most humane and fair under the circumstances, a striking reminder that it is not abstract logic that determines the success of native policies, so much as the policy's own adaptability to the existing situation.<sup>39</sup>

But the modified segregation implied in the *cantonnement* idea did not receive a fair application in practice, for once more, a practical policy was submerged beneath an overwhelming tide of theory coming out of France,—this time due to the unreasoning liberalism of 1860, when France, intoxicated for the time being by the reforming wine of the free-trade treaties, and the concept of "the noble savage," wanted to vindicate

<sup>39</sup> The *cantonnement* of the thirteen tribes is described in the Franck-Chauveau Report, *Propriété Foncière* (Senatorial Commission, 1892), in *Journal Officiel*, Senate, doc. parl., sess. ord., 1893, p. 262 *et seq.* A special report on the law of 1851 was published by Dareste in 1852.

her reputation for liberalism. A *sénatus-consulte* of April, 1863, therefore reserved the land to the tribes, and altogether presaged an idyllic development, with Arabs and Europeans evolving in harmony towards a kind of lesser millennium. In the important letter prefixing the law, this ideal was summed up, and may be emphasized by way of contrast with the actual results of the change.

"The territories of the tribes once known," it ran, "they can be divided into *douars*, which will later allow the attainment of individual property by the prudent initiative of the administration. The undoubted masters of their soil, the natives can dispose of it at will: and, from the multiplicity of transactions between them and the colonists, will be born daily relations more efficacious than all the coercive measures for bringing them to our civilization. To the natives, the raising of horses and cattle, and natural cultures of the soil: and to European activity and intelligence, the exploitation of forests and mines, water-supply and irrigation, the introduction of perfected cultures, and the importation of those industries which always accompany agricultural progress." <sup>40</sup>

Thus Paris: but, in Algeria, drought and cholera and revolt reigned in these years, and, instead of the sylvan co-operation thus elaborated, there were two enemies,—the advancing settlers disgruntled by the sufferings of the past, and so more determined to fight for the future, and the retreating Arabs, decimated by disease and suffering, and resolved to make a stand against the troopers who were even then penetrating the Kabylie mountains and against the settlers who were already beyond the Mitijda plain.

The reality and the ideal conflicted, and the gap was strengthened rather than bridged when this law of 1863 declared the tribes proprietors of the lands of which they had had "permanent and traditional enjoyment." Such a policy may have been practical in 1830, but in 1863 it was only a tragical joke,—the misplaced sport, as it were, of a cynical Titan of colonization. To guarantee their lands to the Arabs when for thirty years they had been driven back by *refoulement* to the desert-fringe seemed to them to be excoriating an unhealed sore: to hand over lands to the Arabs seemed to the settlers, who had won their precarious post at the cost of 150,000 lives, a betrayal and treason. Thus, a seeming concession roused antagonism on both sides, and, in the six years before the revolt of 1871, Algeria, because of the mockery of facts in this inapplicable policy, was a land arrayed for war. And, in the interim, cholera and drought and still more cholera served as appropriate "extras" for the scene being enacted in the centre of the stage. There was something grimly ironical in the way in which an ultra-liberal policy had thus

<sup>40</sup> This, with the relevant documents, is in full in Estoublon et Lefébure, *Code de l'Algérie annoté* (1896), p. 296 *et seq.*, or Piquet (1912), *op. cit.*, pp. 165-167.

evoked abysmal passions, and had led to far worse results than the most frankly spoliatory policy. Spoliation at least would have won over one side : the policy of 1863 alienated both, the Arabs because of the mockery of the situation and because they interpreted the concessions as a pretext for individualization, and the settlers because their hopes of getting land seemed to be indefinitely postponed.

In practice the law safeguarding tribal lands meant a definition and division of the land between the various tribes, and thus a step in the direction of individualism. It prepared the way for a further change, and made the position clear. Incidentally it demonstrated the correctness of the Arabs' forecast as to what the law would mean. Not only this, it also meant actual spoliation at the moment, because the tribal lands were held to consist only of the land actually used, and not that vaguely occupied. The rest went to the Government, and thus the nominally liberal system meant a continuance of *cantonement*, but with this significant difference that the psychological atmosphere was gloomier than ever. The 1863 law thus came to be the forerunner of alienation. It defined the raw materials with which the Government had to work, and, by 1870, the administrators had the elements of the problem plainly arrayed in front of them,—376 tribes with nearly seven million hectares of land, divided into 676 *douars* or groups, and each lot accurately delimited.<sup>41</sup> The vagueness of the problem had gone : hereafter, everything was a matter of mathematics.

The stage was all set for the next step, the law of July, 1873, which aimed at changing the group lands, thus accurately defined, into individual lands,—that is, so converting them that they would be easily disposable. The aim was to deprive the Arab of his land in an indirect legal fashion, and so each legislative act proceeded a stage nearer that goal. At this date, the need for speeding-up the process was evident : the lands available for colonization were diminishing : the voluntary individualization expected by the *sénatus-consulte* of 1863 had not eventuated : and the temper of the natives, as demonstrated by the insurrection of 1871, showed that nothing was to be hoped for in this direction, especially with the impression made by the confiscations after the revolt. The new law, therefore, abruptly said that French ideas of land-ownership had to apply to Algeria, and that, as in France, the law of the indivisibility of property could no longer pertain. French laws were to apply, and any tribesman, being a co-proprietor in communally-held land, could apply for his share, and, as a result of the application, the whole of the land involved had to be divided among the individuals to whom it

<sup>41</sup> Burdeau Report, 1892, p. 166. For the adverse side, see Aynard (1912), *op. cit.*, pp. 270-273.

belonged. Communal land-ownership, old principle of Moslem law though it was, was thus attacked root-and-branch: the French, though still couching the law in voluntary terms, had in effect declared for immediate and rapid individualization, and had progressed from the previous stage of defining tribal lands to the new position of definitely attacking group-ownership. Land had to become individual and alienable, a transferable commodity, notwithstanding all the dictates of religion and tradition and social organization.<sup>42</sup>

The results of this application of European concepts to a society organized on a completely different basis were to be expected. It was transferring a principle applicable under one set of conditions to vitally different ones, and naturally the evil and the proposed remedy had little in common. Indeed, so great was the disparity that many of the evils of modern Algeria can be traced to the operation of this law of 1873, which clearly delivered the natives over to economic bondage. The most obvious result was to bring the spirit of speculation into the tribes. Any co-proprietor, however infinitesimal his share or however low his standing, could demand his share; and the whole tribal organization shattered as a result. It was not a difficult matter for Europeans to find Arab "men of straw," and to induce them to demand their legal rights.

Here entered the evil of the situation, for it was found in practice that such a demand as often as not led to the dispossession of the rest of the tribe by what was known as the process of *licitation*. The majority of the Arabs affected could not understand the intricate legal process, nor perceive why they should have to pay large costs when they received no obvious advantages. Negligent of such legal forms, and wading in a mass of technicalities quite above them and quite incompatible with their ideas of land-ownership, they very often lost their lands by default; and, even where they were aware of the significance of what was taking place, could not do anything owing to the high costs. The ordinary Arab was sacrificed at the altar of a strange god, and by a legal ritual which he could not in the least understand.

The report of the Franck-Chauveau Commission of 1893 made this quite clear,<sup>43</sup> and showed how the process of division on the demand of one individual really meant expropriation of all or much of the tribal land. One instance quoted by the report, though on an exaggerated scale, was yet typical of what was in some measure taking place everywhere. A group of 513 natives held 292 hectares of land, and one of them demanded individualization. He sold his rights for 20 francs, and the process of definition, once started, had to go on. In the end, the costs of this

<sup>42</sup> Law is in Estoublon et Lefébure, *op. cit.*, p. 395 *et seq.*

<sup>43</sup> Franck-Chauveau Report, *op. cit.*, p. 262 *et seq.*

minute subdivision were eleven thousand francs, and the entire property, when sold by distress, was bought by a French clerk for 80 francs ! All of the natives were deprived of their lands and scattered ; and this case was exceptional only because of the minuteness of the areas. French laws and French tribunals meant heavy expenses, and the point was that, willy-nilly, the natives were drawn in despite their will, on the demand frequently of a tribal reprobate, and, once in, they could not withdraw until the process was completed. The law, nominally based on voluntary action, operated as a veritable Juggernaut for the natives who were thrust within its clutches ; and the result was that, from 1883 to 1889, the Algerian natives lost 40 per cent. of their lands, largely by forced judicial sales.<sup>44</sup> There was no doubt that the natives suffered cruelly, and without receiving any return, however inadequate.

The next difficulty, apart from the opportunity of abuse offered to individuals and the placing of the whole tribal destinies at the mercies of any one individual, was that the law was inapplicable in principle. It was the application of an ultra-legal European process to a society unsophisticated and uneducated, and, moreover, already amply provided for under their traditional land-tenure. It was like attempting to apply the English law of succession and real-estate to the neolithic society of 10,000 years ago, without any preparation or education : the gap of thousands of years in social organization was ignored. The Arabs had not progressed to that social stage in which individualization was wise, or when individual responsibilities could be exercised in a successful manner. As a Governor-General concluded : " We thought to free property before freeing men. The very idea of property, such as the Roman Law and long centuries of progress have made it with us, was foreign to the Arab spirit, and it is only by degrees that it can be introduced." <sup>45</sup> The confused family idea, under a patriarchal system of polygamy, made such a sudden reform quite impossible : the family itself had to be defined before property could be, otherwise the cart was being put before the horse.

Further, the individual had to be created before he could be given his lands, for, striking as it may seem, the individual as such did not exist in the Algeria of 1873. The natives had no *état civil*, or even patronymic name,—so hundreds of individual titles bore the same name. For a time, the tragical aspects of the situation were merged in the farcical, for the French officials tried to solve the dilemma by themselves picking names for the natives. This was a huge joke so far as the natives were concerned, and the funniest thing of all the funny things that these itinerant Lands Commissioners, who so confused and amused the natives,

<sup>44</sup> Piquet (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 207.

<sup>45</sup> Burdeau Report, 1892, p. 175.



did. The major processes were to the natives utterly incomprehensible, but still, it was Kismet, the foreigners said it had to be : but here was a new game they could understand. Everything, therefore, went well under the new plan, until the French began to suspect that it was going too well, and found that the obliging natives readily accepted the names given them,—indeed, accepted various names from various Commissioners ! “Some made a collection, carefully kept in the bottom of their *chechia* (hood).”<sup>46</sup> Therefore, in 1883, France had to retrace her steps and pass a law regularizing the *état civil* of the natives,—in a word, creating them as individuals. All the time, while the State was thus achieving nothing, the speculators, spurred on by their success and easily finding willing agents in a crumbling native society, were selling up the land. The natives suffered, the State gained nothing and was indeed losing the seven francs a hectare that individualization usually cost, but the speculators had found a permanent and infallible confidence-game, where the victims either remained unsophisticated or, awakening to the realities of the situation, could do nothing.

The Burdeau Report of 1892 and Franck-Chauveau's investigations in the following year showed the folly of this individualization, and its absolute needlessness when more lands continued to be sold under all the pre-1873 confusion than under the new law. Therefore, the process of a general division on individual demand was stopped. But the clock could not be set back to 1873, nor could the process be abruptly stopped by law. Division had commenced, and had to go on : a ban on all activity was a negative policy and no solution of the problem. Quite apart from the forced rate of evolution attempted by the law of 1873, the old communism was giving way, even amongst the populations of the steppes, as French influence advanced. This was a natural transformation, and the Arab saw that individualization in itself, and as distinct from the harmful methods with which it had been associated in the past, certainly possessed advantages. The rights of free work and personal property were growing, and, by a mutual development, would have affected communal land-ownership. The French, therefore, complicated rather than eased the problem by forbidding all transfer and alienation. This was a reaction to an impracticable extreme, and so, by a law of 1897, a compromise was sought between unduly hastened individualization and unduly retarded reform.<sup>47</sup> The idea was to give any individual his land, without enabling him to upset the whole tribe and without giving him a coercive power over his fellows. In short,

<sup>46</sup> Burdeau Report, 1892, p. 169.

<sup>47</sup> Laroche, *Traité élémentaire de Législation algérienne* (3rd edition, 1911), Vol. III, No. 818.

it wanted the benefits and not the abuses of the position of 1873 and tried to uphold native interests and yet allow foreigners to buy land. The device was by "a partial inquiry" as against "the general inquiry" of the earlier law: any individual on demand could receive, not the division of all the land within his group, but the definition of his own share, leaving the rest untouched. The law of 1873 had forced individualization equally on the majority who did not wish it, and the minority who wished to sell: this new law affected only those who desired the change, and had no coercive effect on those who wished to stand outside its terms. It allowed reform and progress, without upsetting the whole tribal structure and without sacrificing the mass of the natives.

Under the new law, any Arab could apply for the registration of his own share of the communally-owned land. A board of experts considered the claim and took into account equity as well as the letter of the law, thus safeguarding the natives. The title, if registered, then allowed alienation, and so land was made available to settlers, without disturbing those natives who did not share in the transaction.

From the first the results were good. By 1909, 115,000 hectares, and, by the end of 1921, 379,275 hectares were individualized in this manner, especially in Constantine.<sup>48</sup> But the general position admits of certain criticisms. It is claimed that the procedure is too slow and costly, and that, the economic progress of Algeria in the interim being what it has, there should be far more individualization, especially in Constantine and Oran, the two provinces most affected. Authorities argue for the adoption of the Torrens system of registration, which has proven so applicable in Tunisia and West Africa, and, once its simplicity and advantages are made manifest, for compulsory as against voluntary registration.<sup>49</sup>

The Algerian position is clearly a compromise, compounded of reactions against various past errors; and, while it has allowed the alert, land-seeking Kabyles to increase their holdings, has resulted in something like a lethargy for the Arabs. Lands are being kept idle by the Arab resentment of past policies, and the natives, driven back to their second-line defences near the desert, are as opposed as ever to progress or to compromise with the French. The present position arises from past errors and the disillusioned hostility thus engendered in native minds; and is a compromise which has perforce to be tolerated, rather than the best policy which logic or the actual conditions could evolve.

<sup>48</sup> For operation see van Vollenhoven (1903), *op. cit.*, p. 99; *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1922, p. 335. A new law was passed in July, 1926, to remedy certain abuses.

<sup>49</sup> E.g. the Flandin proposal, in *L'Afrique Française*, Dec. 1921, p. 428. Cp. Girault, Vol. III, p. 379 note, for need of change.

The history of land transactions in Algeria has thus not been successful, and, to 1897 at least, could be more positively described as a dismal record of failure: the crop sown by the despoiling acts of last century is now bearing fruit,—an insoluble dilemma in the way of all reform.

### JUSTICE

The land imbroglio was closely connected with the general problem of justice. In the one field, an abrupt and cataclysmic Europeanization had resulted in a forced reversion to native ideas, and an attitude of waiting for gradual and normal change. So it was with the wider problem of justice.<sup>50</sup> Europeanization *à outrance* was attempted at first, but had to yield to a compromise and to a consideration of native influences.

The first policy was to replace the Mohammedan *cadis* or judges and their tribunals (*mahakmas*) by smashing the whole structure and introducing the ideas of the Code Napoléon, both in the criminal and the civil spheres. Here, as elsewhere, the French were convinced of the unquestionable superiority and the universal applicability of their own institutions. French justice was beyond question and good everywhere; and therefore any pre-existing form was simply an obstacle to be brushed aside in order that the backward natives could the better experience the freedom and equity of the French forms.

Clearly opposed to this was the native view-point. The Koran was their religion and their law: it was fixed and immutable; and any interference of outside civil or criminal law would be an interference with their liberty and their religion, the direct cause, perchance, of a Holy War. They said that the law, being fixed by Mohammed, could not change, and that the French contention that it had to keep pace with changing conditions was heretical as well as foolish. There was all the conflict between the immobile and the evolutionary concepts, with the difference accentuated by religious fanaticism and racial hate.<sup>51</sup>

The French early accepted the principle of French law for all criminal cases (1842), but the trouble was occasioned by the civil law, especially as it affected land matters. Everything in this sphere was confused and vague, and rested on traditional bases and old religious usages that could not be examined in the light of logic and practical utility. The confusion was such as to be anathema to legally precise Frenchmen, as, for instance, with the case of a liquidation going to forty successions, and finished by the division of the land in question with a fraction,

<sup>50</sup> Isaac Report (Senatorial Commission, 1892) in *Journal Officiel*, Senate, doc. parl., sess. ord., 1896, p. 403.

<sup>51</sup> For conflict, see Pouyanne (1900), *op. cit.*, p. 608.

the denominator of which ran to fourteen figures! But this case at least allowed of some decision: most simply rambled on for ever, in a maze of obscure and contradictory interpretations.<sup>52</sup> The Mohammedan civil-law was a happy hunting-ground, especially with people as naturally litigious as the Arabs, and with whom simplifying reforms served only to arouse opposition. The French, therefore, had two problems—to simplify the maze of traditional law so as to know where they stood, and then to reconcile the law as thus defined with the principles of the French Code. But codification of Mohammedan law was not achieved until 1916, by the Code Morand, and, in the intervening ninety years, there had been many reforms founded on a more or less complete ignorance.

The way out had been the shortest one,—by transferring various matters in turn from the Koranic to French law until French law came to be the principle, with Mohammedan the exception and confined to certain specific cases. This was completed in Kabylie, first of all, by 1874, because there the clean sweep of Kabylie institutions after the revolt of 1871 left a *tabula rasa*. Since then, these mountaineers have been entirely under French law, for civil as for criminal matters, but simplified to take account of their traditions. The upshot has been relatively satisfactory, because the Kabyle, always a keen individualist, and by no means as casual or as insouciant as the Arab, can look after his own interests to a degree that the Arab cannot; and, moreover, they had no pre-existing religious code to divert their attention from the French law.

In both of these directions, that is, as regards existing law and individual incompetence, the matter was more difficult with the Arabs. Nevertheless, a decree of September, 1886, with the temerity of misunderstanding, bodily transferred land-matters to the French courts. But, as the matter could not be solved so simply, a supplementary decree of three years later arranged for the adaptation of French laws to native conditions, the various customs and usages of the tribe in question being taken into account: in other words, an element of equity was introduced.<sup>53</sup> Even this proved inadequate: the gulf was there, and could not be bridged as long as the approach was from the French to the native point of view, and not *vice versa*. A medley of Arab customs could not be clad with meaning by the interpretation of a French justice or by the twisting of the nearest possible French law to suit the conditions of the given case. To quote even a single instance of this disparity, French law knows a process called "sale with power of redemption,"

<sup>52</sup> Pouyanne (1900), *op. cit.*, p. 59, or article in *Revue algérienne*, 1917, p. 69.

<sup>53</sup> *Journal Officiel*, *Déps.*, 11/9/86, 18/4/89.

but limits the period of redemption to five years, whereas the Koranic law allows it to go on for ever. That means that a native pledging his land to a European and thinking that his option of redemption is a perpetual one, loses his land entirely if he does not repurchase it within five years ; and, landless, he becomes a potential rebel, because, according to his law, he has been openly robbed of his patrimony, and the foreigners' courts have legalized the robbery !

Then, even where there was no basic opposition between French and native law, the slowness of French justice and the stress on form and logic made it inapplicable to the needs of the situation. The appellant in times past had been sacrificed to the arbitrariness of the *cadi* and *beylik*, but a man knowing human nature, or, better still, the remedies for obstinacy, could assert himself against this, whereas with this new grinding machine, impersonal and aloof, he had no redress save a decision given by a logic based on quite different conditions.

The rigid adherence to French legal forms, even absorbing as many native customs as the French basis permitted, did not meet the situation ; and the natives were gradually forced into an opposition *bloc*, their temper being demonstrated in the abortive but significant Margueritte rising of 1901.<sup>54</sup> The avowed cause of this was an indefinable *malaise* or feeling of repression, due to the operation of a code of laws different from that to which they had been accustomed. European justice seemed to be a mysterious and terrible machine ; and so, in 1902, there was a reversion to the "repressive tribunals" or summary jurisdiction, which meant a more efficient and rapid justice, and one, untrammelled by the *minutiae* of the French legal code, more suitable to the conditions.<sup>55</sup> The ignorant casual nature of the Arab could understand this summary procedure, and could appreciate the consideration given to his code and customs, instead of the determination being based on the strange and meaningless law from overseas. The change of 1902, partial and bitterly attacked though it was, was really a return to native principles and native codes, and the jurists notwithstanding, a step towards the more equitable and more economical system which has evolved in other French colonies,—the French law for criminal, and, in main, the native law for civil cases. Algeria, however, carries on the older idea of as much assimilation to the *Code Napoléon* in all its branches as is possible, with the corollary of a destruction of native institutions. Indo-China and West Africa and Tunisia, and, indeed, most of the colonies founded after

<sup>54</sup> *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, 15/6/01, p. 755. *L'Afrique Française*, May, 1901, p. 141, or Drumont interpellation in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 1/6/01.

<sup>55</sup> For this much-discussed issue, see Larcher in *Revue algérienne*, 1902-1903, or Girault, Vol. III, p. 290 *et seq.*

1880, have the newer and more elastic system: Algeria retains the rigidity of the all-French conception, the results being the piling of new fuel on the fire of Mohammedan discontent and a breakdown in practice.<sup>56</sup>

### POLITICAL

Land and judicial reforms in Algeria had thus either failed or resulted in a limping compromise, with the hostility of the natives unabated. Nor was this impression in any wise allayed by the political measures taken by the French. In the first place, the Algerians were not given the rights of French citizens: the Jews, despised by the Mohammedans, were naturalized *en masse* in 1870, but, up to 1919, a native could only be naturalized by the Imperial decree of 1866, which imposed so many formalities that the natives would not come under it, and which, moreover, involved a renunciation of their *statut personnel*, which to a Mohammedan amounts to apostasy. Accordingly, only 736 natives had accepted naturalization before 1890, and even these appeared blissfully ignorant of the new obligations they had incurred, such, for instance, as increased taxation or limitation of their harems.<sup>57</sup> By 1906 the number had swollen to 1,362, but naturalization was still an exception. The natives stood aloof, refused to intermarry or to become French citizens, and clearly showed that they wished no bridging of the gap between the two races.<sup>58</sup> They protested vigorously against the conscription which was introduced in 1912, and which resulted in a solidifying of Mohammedan opinion and the emergence of a "Young Algerian" party, pledged to the fight for economic and political reforms.<sup>59</sup> They protested that they had responsibilities without corresponding privileges, and that the economic and political worlds were closed to them.

That their plea was in part justified was unquestionable. Despite the various reforms and reorganizations, the Algerians were in practically the same position as they had been when Napoleon III had enflamed their national pride by speaking of an "Arab Kingdom." The French conception was that societal advance was beyond the ken of the natives, and that all they could appreciate was a justly exercised force. Even Jules Ferry had reported in 1892 that "the Moslems have no notion of the political mandate or of limited and contractual authority: they know nothing of a representative *régime* or of the separation of powers, but they have in the highest degree the instinct and need and ideal of strong power and just power. In their eyes France is force, she must

<sup>56</sup> Aynard (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 142.

<sup>57</sup> Burdeau Report, 1892, p. 224.

<sup>58</sup> V. Démontès, *Le Peuple Algérien* (1906), p. 214,—363 intermarriages in sixty-three years. Cp. Ibn Habilas, *L'Algérie française vue par un Indigène* (1914), pp. 113-114.

<sup>59</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, 1912, pp. 226, 275, 479.

be justice too.”<sup>60</sup> That was the prevalent conception, even with the reformers: the natives were to be governed from above,—justly, it is true, but still with the strong hand, and they were to take no part in group-life.

All that was done, therefore, was to utilize native functionaries in allowing native life to go on as before, and to make a spectacular gesture by an infinitesimal participation in the outside political world. The *caïd* or native chief was to remain, and the affairs of each tribal section managed by a *djemaa* or council of notables. Where such institutions did not exist, they were simply created by decree. For instance, there was no organization of the tribes as a whole, therefore a decree of 1895 instituted tribal-*djemaa*s.<sup>61</sup> But, outside of this, the natives had no part in politics, except a small representation in certain local assemblies and a nominated section in the *Délégations Financières*: they had no representation in the Deputies or Senate, and took no part in sending the general colonial representatives to Parliament. Even their representatives in the municipal councils in certain parts of the country had their powers restricted and, as a whole, the great native body was inarticulate. Native representatives, such as there were, were contemptuously dubbed “*Beni-oui-oui*,” in reference to their lack of independence and servile attitude, for, whether elected or nominated, their diffidence in general amounted almost to self-effacement. The natives were viewed as the evil genius of the land, apart and impenetrable, partly a menace and wholly a nuisance: to speak of co-operation with them was the mark either of an idealist or of one who did not live in Algeria. They just drifted along in stagnation.

So obvious was the failure that a Commission headed by Clemenceau and Leygues in 1915 reported that certain far-reaching reforms were not only desirable, but could with justice and policy be no longer postponed.<sup>62</sup> The “native code,” consisting of laws specially discriminatory for the natives, had to be further reduced on the lines of the law of 1914: the native electoral body had to be extended, and efficient representation accorded in the *Délégations Financières* and the general and municipal councils: a new *régime* of naturalization, which did not necessarily imply a renunciation of the *statut personnel* so sacrosanct to the Moslem,

<sup>60</sup> Ferry Report, 1892, p. 82; compare statement of President of Council of Ministers in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 24/12/98.

<sup>61</sup> V. Piquet, *Les Réformes en Algérie et le Statut des Indigènes* (1919), p. 159 *et seq.*

<sup>62</sup> There had been long debates on this question in 1914. See especially *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 10/2/14. For the Clemenceau-Lyegues Report, see *Contribution à l'étude des réformes concernant la situation économique et politique des indigènes algériens* (1916).

provided : and, above all, new guarantees given for the safeguarding of native property. The whole would lead to, and in turn be developed by, the reform of the natives themselves, for they had demonstrated that a race cannot lose its place and traditions for eighty years and have no adequate return, without a weakening in moral fibre and sinking into a morass of supineness and ineffectiveness. The Arabs were rapidly becoming either soulless serfs or *fellahs*, or impoverished and hopeless desert-dwellers, equally lacking initiative and character. The traditional French policy of "Let us weaken them by dividing them and by sapping their virility" was bearing its fruit, and it became obvious, too obvious in fact, how this policy of attrition, by the very degree of its success, involved a weakened community.

After the strengthened *morale* of the war years, therefore, France sought to retrieve her native policy in Algeria, and, in 1919, passed a decree giving the native a greater degree of representation in local assemblies and a law allowing them, under certain conditions, to become French citizens.<sup>63</sup> These reforms aroused much opposition, and it is difficult to see how they were the most suitable starting-point for the regeneration of the Arab, especially in view of the lack of native eagerness to become naturalized, and the priority they give to their economic grievances. But, since the very fact of their introduction betokened a changing mental outlook on the part of the French, they were significant, although they no longer met the situation. Just as ten years before, the centre of native discontent had gone from land-matters to questions of "general status," so now it had passed to economic grievances,—an alteration of emphasis which is perhaps the most significant commentary on the changing demands of native policy and general evolution in the new Algeria.

### ECONOMICS

Algeria is a country of Stone Age agriculturists and pastoralists, and this is the dominating feature in every question relating to it : it has always been thus, and, if the events of the last century will not justify the statement that it will always be thus, they at least show that for long, there will be little change, as progress and the Arab temperament seem incompatible. The native difficulty was twofold, the first and the most grievous question being that of taxation. The natives had to submit to special taxation without corresponding privileges : the

<sup>63</sup> For this important law, see *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 15/5/18, for original project ; Deps. 8/11/18 and Senate 31/1/19, for passage ; Senate, 4/12/18, annexe, for Steeg's Report ; and 6/2/19 for law in full. For its operation, see *Journal Officiel*, 16/11/19.



Europeans have never had direct taxes save on land and business ; but the natives, in addition to these, were subject to an entire network of taxes called the "Arab imposts." Kabylie had a special *régime*, but elsewhere a land tax was paid, and an additional tax on communally held land, and a tax on stock, and a tax on date-palms, and various *corvées*. In the nineties, the total was twelve francs a year, and the natives paid about half the total taxation raised in the land.<sup>64</sup>

From the French point of view, this was satisfactory, because the colonists were relieved of the necessity of finding half their taxes,—for, since the natives received no proportionate advantages, this is what the situation amounted to. Quite naturally, a special Commission of 1892 reported in favour of maintaining the Arab taxes, although Commissions of 1895–1898 and 1902, approaching the matter from a different angle, stressed the inequitable nature of such burdens.<sup>65</sup> Everything connected with them was unfair from the natives' point of view. For the natives, with their inadequate share of the country's wealth, to pay half the State's expenses was clearly unfair, even if they received advantages in return ; but, where there was neither protection nor facilities to progress, the taxation was virtually spoliation,—a duplication of the process that was going on with regard to their lands. As Jonnart reported in 1893, "the interests of the Arabs who do not vote, but who pay and who support heavy charges, are unfortunately sacrificed to those of some dozens of electors who, if they enjoy the right to vote, enjoy also the privilege of not paying much." Three and a half million natives were taxed by a handful of colonists who knew that every livre won from the natives was one less that they themselves had to pay,—clearly "a denial of justice, a kind of exploitation," as Jonnart said, the more so as "nothing or almost nothing is done for them."<sup>66</sup>

Nor was there even an equality of suffering under the scheme, because the Southerner, much poorer though he was, paid almost twice as much as the settled dweller of the Tell, and Oran a third as much again as the richer Constantine. And it was a curious way of fostering agricultural improvements to tax a plough 49 francs in Oran and 36·75 francs in Constantine, when the administration was endeavouring to replace wooden sticks by ploughs ! In addition, the system diverted the scanty capital of the natives from productive employment. It not only acted

<sup>64</sup> Burdeau Report, 1892, annexe 2, pp. 394–396.

<sup>65</sup> For these varying view-points, see the Clamageran Report (Senatorial Commission, 1892), in *Journal Officiel*, Senate, doc. parl., sess. ext., 1892, p. 518, and the following reports published by the Government-General : *Procès-verbaux des délibérations de la Commission d'études de l'impôt arabe* (1892) ; *Commission d'études des charges fiscales* (1898) ; *Commission pour l'étude des impôts arabes* (1902).

<sup>66</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 7/2/93.

as a deterrent of agricultural advance, not only absorbed money that could have been spent on improvements, but even cut into the capital of the natives as distinct from their annual turnover. This is clearly proved by the fact that, in each quinquennial period after 1883, the yield of each native tax, without exception, was steadily diminishing—a luminous commentary in an agricultural country where the yield of taxation was directly based on the agricultural productivity of the people.<sup>67</sup> If the yield was declining, so too was the agricultural wealth of the Arabs, for the one varied directly with the other. Clearly, the essential vice of the Arab taxes was their very existence, for they were as anti-developmental as unjust, and were not even redeemed by being “socially directed,” that is, so levied as to act as direct inducements to make the natives work or to produce desirable social changes. Finance was the only consideration, and the taxes really became a mortgage on the future development of the country.

This position largely explained the second economic difficulty of the Arabs,—the difficulty of conforming themselves to an economic world which was changing from patriarchal to capitalistic agriculture. There was no doubt at any time in the last fifty years whether the Arab was giving way. He could not stand up to the changed conditions, and could not adapt his methods of life to the new demands; but this was not all. Such a failure did not only mean that the native was standing still while others round him were forging ahead. It also implied that he had to give way actually as well as relatively. In the economic struggle, the weaker side not only had to accept the terms of the victor, but had also to relinquish its belongings. It was an economic war without Hague conventions. Thus, the natives lost two million hectares of land between 1882 and 1900,—the equivalent of 100 million francs, and much of the remainder was being engulfed in the well of usury. Coincidentally with this, production was falling off, and the position of land-holder and labourer gravitated from bad to worse. Ibn Habilas, the spokesman of his fellows, thus held that there was little appreciable difference between the position of the Algerian *fellah* in 1830 and 1924, and Piquet claimed that “the impoverishment of the native is the gravest danger menacing Algeria.”<sup>68</sup> This had been perceived in the nineties, at least after the vitriolic reports of Jonnart and the soberly moral appeal of Ferry’s Commission and the sturdy denunciation of his fellow-Frenchmen by Burdeau. All of these had pointed to the canker of native decline in Algeria, the result being the appointment of a Commission in 1898

<sup>67</sup> Van Vollenhoven (1903), *op. cit.*, pp. 140–141. The special native taxes were abolished in 1918.

<sup>68</sup> Ibn Habilas (1914), *op. cit.*, pp. 67, 137.

to study the measures needed for the protection of native property. However, as the harvest was of opinions rather than facts, little of a constructive nature emerged from these investigations—save one thing, that usury was the immediate cause of the agricultural decline in Algeria, and, with such a heedless native population, spelt economic serfdom.<sup>69</sup>

Agriculture was becoming increasingly competitive and capitalistic: to keep standing, the native had to change his methods and become efficient. But, given the necessary temperament (and the French rather neglected this at the moment), capital was necessary, and in such a way that it could help native advancement without enslaving them and their descendants to a usurer. A law of 1893 had started by organizing voluntary credit-societies, based on the principle of the co-operation of the farmers in a given district, and imposing the security of the group between the individual farmer and the ruin which threatened him. Within fifteen years, such bodies came to include 620,000 members, largely in the back regions, because it was found that, in the joint native and European municipalities, the natives were so sophisticated by contact with the Europeans that they resorted to trickery and spoilt the spirit of the whole scheme, especially when everything depended on the character of the participants and a mutual trust. A law of 1902 went further and provided for agricultural banks on private initiative, a form of agricultural credit existing in the provinces of France itself. This meant that the farmers of a given region could act as a Bank, and receive joint loans for local dispersal. It was really an extension of the credit-society idea, but was not very successful. By the end of 1916, there were thirty-nine such regional Banks, all but eight including both natives and Europeans, but with only 16,000 adherents in all. Nothing has yet been done for long-term credit for individuals, and the State, until 1926, played no part, either directly or indirectly, in securing an adequate system of rural advances, a lack the more obvious in a country that is not only entirely agricultural but is composed of very poor farmers.<sup>70</sup>

It is true, as has been previously pointed out, that the average native character would not seem to justify any extensive scheme at present, for the natives seem shiftless and untrustworthy to a degree, and more prepared to violate the spirit of credit-associations than to take advantage of their facilities and repay the advances. But, as against this, there is the need of the State doing something to stem the decline, even at a loss, because the *fellah's* position is so precarious. The words that Ferry

<sup>69</sup> Compare Ferry's attack in Senate, in *Journal Officiel*, 7/3/91, or the voluminous *Documents de l'enquête de la Commission de protection de propriété indigène en Algérie* (1898).

<sup>70</sup> Aynard (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 299; Girault, Vol. III, p. 420 *et seq.*

wrote in 1892 (and it is sufficient commentary on the thirty years between that they apply with a greater force to-day than they did when written) adequately sum up the situation :—

“ With the years, the memory of the sanguinary wars would disappear : what will perpetuate them are the unjust or badly-conceived economic measures, the rigours of the forest *régime* (affecting native pasture), the expropriation of the soil, sequestrations which are not liquidated, the exploitation of native *douars* by French municipalities, and the continually growing weight and the unfair incidence of the taxes.”<sup>71</sup>

The old hatred is kept alive and deepened by the economic wrongs to which the native has had to submit, and France has realized since 1914 that there can be no permanent progress in a community in which the mass of the people are relegated to a segregated world of suffering and reduced to a growing impotence. The strength of the whole depends on that of the parts, and it is now clear that the solution of the problem by weakening the natives to a position of hopelessness is no solution at all, but a weakening of the entire colony. The demoralization of any section of the people, and especially if this section is numerically predominant, can under no conditions strengthen the community, and France is meeting the retribution of a century of policy based on exploitation. So that, economically, she has to commence by retrieving the effect of the accumulated errors of the past, and finds herself hindered by the barrier of mistrust and racial hate.

The Arabs have lost most of their lands and, on the whole, have not progressed economically ; and therein is the native problem. The Kabyles, on the other hand, because of their acquisitive traits and combatant individualism, doubtless in no small measure due to their mountain environment, have prospered, especially in the direction of amassing land, and show how a native race can emerge, even in the face of European opposition. Their success, however, serves only to deepen the gloom of the Arab dilemma, as demonstrating that, however much the basic fault may be with French policy, much must also be attributed to the feckless and irresponsible nature of the Arabs themselves.

So that the problem again splits, and becomes not only one of reversing previous policies and removing their results, but of removing the deterioration of the Arab character in the last century, and, still more difficult, of moulding even the unspoiled Arabs to progressive view-points. In a word, a character-training is called for, and largely owing to the events of the last century, with very poor material. The Arab as a century of French rule has left him, is not a forceful paladin of the desert but a deplorably inert and apathetic weakling, knowing no advance and

<sup>71</sup> Ferry Report, 1892, p. 82.

caring for none, idly awkward and intellectually powerless,—according to a competent French authority. As raw material for a policy of peasant-proprietorship in a virgin country, he is almost hopeless, and yet a policy of *laissez-faire* is no longer possible. The French tried to exterminate them at first, but (save in the sixties) they increased: they expropriated their lands, they impoverished them, they have forced them back, but they still increase and suffer and weaken the State. And so the problem becomes increasingly important, and the Government does not know where to attack the vicious circle, for, even if it acts decisively, it is brought up against the undependable native temperament. Clearly, naturalization, or embryonic political privileges, or ineffective credit institutions are not adequate remedies: yet there the French rest, and perhaps the native problem in Algeria remains the sorriest piece of work in the whole of the French Empire, surpassing in its ineffectiveness the policy of the towns in India or in New Caledonia or the Senegalese *communes*.

The breakdown is clearly recognized, and to read of Burdeau's aim in 1892, with its idea of a progressive collaboration based on the provision of new economic interests and needs for the natives, is almost farcical. A long debate in the Deputies, for seven sessions of January, 1921,<sup>72</sup> exposed the existing position, thrown into clear relief by the long-continued drought. The Algerian deputy showed the native crisis in its true light as a condemnation of the past and a mortgage on the future, and demanded the obvious reforms like increased representation, better municipal self-government, the development of agricultural education and rural credit, the Torrens Act of land registration, and a clear safeguarding of native property,—the same list of reforms which has been advocated for half a century.<sup>73</sup>

The native race is ethnically impenetrable, that is clear: what is equally clear is that it has to become progressive, otherwise progress for Algeria and security for the Europeans there are out of the question. Thus one gets back to Jonnart's budget-report of 1893: "Security? We will have it when we cease to exploit the native under the pretext of emancipating and assimilating him."<sup>74</sup> But now, the problem is not so much to stop the exploitation as to remedy the state of nerveless atony to which it has reduced the Arabs. The native menace is not now one of *razzias* or revolts, but of a canker in the body social and economic. They are no longer an obstacle to be thrust aside: thrust aside time and

<sup>72</sup> A full account is in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 24-31/1/21,—a most important exposé.

<sup>73</sup> The reforms desired by the moderates are in Ibn Habilas (1914), *op. cit.*, pp. 117-121, 137-138.

<sup>74</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 7/2/93.

again, they have come back as a responsibility and as a weakening element in the community, and with a future which cannot simply be eradicated from the Europeans' point of view. That is the retribution which the Arab of to-day is unknowingly demanding of France for the treatment of his forbears; and France is learning that this form of mortgaging the future is always an uneconomic procedure.

#### IV. Land Settlement

As has been seen, the dominating fact in Algeria's history has been the question of land settlement<sup>75</sup>: this is the *motif* giving consistency to the State's economic and native policies, and runs through activity in every direction. After the disillusion of the first two decades, France was seized with the idea that Algeria was a peasant's paradise, a prolongation of France across the Mediterranean where myriads of French settlers would make the Tell bloom with small farms and cosy villages, as in the western provinces of the homeland. A "New France" was the goal (the slogan coming from Prévost-Paradol's much-discussed book of 1868 bearing that title), and this dream has practically been the *fons et origo* of French policy in Algeria. It has been said that nowhere is a tradition created so quickly as in France, and certainly this phrase of Prévost-Paradol's, dubiously applicable though it was, rapidly became a tradition so far as Algeria was concerned. This was the French aspiration for Algeria, the idea of a France *outrémer*, transmitted through Burdeau and Ferry to Sarraut and the post-war reformers, and cherished the more because, save for a far-away strip in New Caledonia, the coast of Algeria was the only part of the entire Empire that could be so developed. A continuation of France, a southern addition to compensate for the losses of the northern frontier,—it was a pleasant dream that the limit of the French Empire should expand from the "blue line of the Vosges" of Ferry's time to the sepia horizon of the Algerian uplands.

This ideal was fostered by the nature of the country. The climate of Northern Algeria was more like that of parts of France than of tropical Africa, and there is far more difference between Flanders and Provence than there is between Algeria and the Midi. So far as climate went, Northern Algeria was a real *colonie de peuplement*. The Alpine peasant was at home in Kabylie, the vigneron of the Aude on the Mitidja plain, and the labourer of Upper-Languedoc on the Bel-Abbès plateau. Algeria was only 700 kilometres away from Marseilles, the fare was less than a

<sup>75</sup> The basic sources for this topic are in M. de Peyerimhoff's huge survey (the best in the colonial literature of any country), entitled *Enquête sur les résultats de la colonisation officielle de 1871 à 1895* (1906), or Pouyanne (1900), *op. cit.*, pp. 211-299. The Labiche Report is in *Journal Officiel*, doc. parl., sess. ord., 1896, p. 15.

pound ; and certainly these facts seemed to support " the prolongation of France " idea. On the other hand, the position was complicated by the vigorous and disaffected native population, who constituted a clear *bloc* athwart the path of settlement and who were often a menace, always a grave obstacle.

Moreover, there was a shortage of land. Practically all, except the sequestered Beylical lands, was held by the natives themselves, who clung tenaciously to their patrimony and surrounded it with a ring-fence of religious taboos or inhibitions. The only way of making land available for settlement, therefore, was by direct expropriation of some form or other, with the consequent difficulties that such a procedure would involve with the natives. Even so, Algeria was a " patchy " desert country, with never more than 100,000 kilometres cultivable. In a word, though the climate was fair, most of the land was worthless and all of it was locked up in the hands of a recalcitrant native population. The *ensemble* of these factors constituted the problem of Algerian settlement : the two factors, native and land, were for ever coming to the surface, now one, now the other, and, between them, effectively removed Algeria from the class of " settlement colonies " and made it a problem *sui generis*, distinct even from its neighbour Tunisia.<sup>76</sup>

From the beginning the French policy of settlement there was dominated by three conceptions, which, with various gaps, lasted till the end of the century. These were a belief in grants as opposed to sale, official villages as opposed to desultory individual action, and small settlement as against capitalistic effort. All of these came from the desire to democratize Algerian settlement, and all were radically different from the policy pursued elsewhere in North Africa, notably in Tunisia, where settlement was based on the opposite concepts of sale, individual effort, and *grande colonisation* by landed *seigneurs*. But, in Algeria, the idea of peopling the land with a class of small farmers, not much elevated above the grade of peasant proprietors, was almost an obsession with the French, doubtless bred by the ideas of mass-emigration engendered by the revolutions of 1848 and 1870. Algeria was to be a re-creation of France, a sunnier peasant-land, and from this idyllic interpretation flowed French land policy.

As far as regarded actual policy, there were three periods. First, up to 1878, there were various experiments, but more in the way of trial-and-error and in the application of general theories than any consecutive policy : then, from 1878 to 1904, there was a consistent policy, so consistent indeed as to sacrifice obviously discordant facts to the shibboleths of the theory,—the theory that the American homestead

<sup>76</sup> de Peyerimhoff, Vol. I, pp. 8-10.

plan was the ideal method of settlement, and that, if managed in Government hands through the *milieu* of officially controlled villages, it could easily be adapted to Algerian conditions. The third period, by reason of the reaction which had been emerging since 1888, naturally took the form of a swingback of policy towards an older line, and the idea of free grants was replaced by that of sale as the basis of land policy. But the connecting-link running through the whole three stages was the notion of official colonization,—that is, settlement in groups at places already chosen and prepared by the administration. The French pinned their faith to this policy, and the various devices of sale or grant or temporary alienation were viewed only as optional methods of securing the common end. It has been the emphasis on the official nature of colonization, and the implied ban on uncontrolled individualistic effort, that has differentiated Algeria for almost a century in this matter of land-settlement, and that has made the experiment doubly interesting from a comparative point of view.

The first period, somewhat naturally, in view of the lack of previous experience in colonization, and because of the determination of policy by an *a priori* theory, was one of painful adjustments to reality. The land and the people seemed to have combined against the first settlers, although probably their greatest foe was the administration that settled them under such conditions. The first Mitidja settlers worked feet in a marsh and harassed by enemy sniping, so that those who escaped the latter succumbed to the disease engendered by the former. In one village, between 1835 and 1841, thirty-six settlers were killed by natives, an equal number were enslaved, and, in one year, more than a quarter of the population died of fever. The lack of even a rudimentary sanitary science was as fatal as the muzzle-loader of the exasperated Arabs, and the dogged, even reckless, determination of the pioneers made them the easier victims. It was no wonder that General Duvivier voiced general opinion in 1841 in stigmatizing even the fertile Mitidja as "a place of sickness and death, a land of jackals and Arab bandits," and, he might have added, the grave of foolish settlers and administrators who were paying for their almost insane folly with their lives. On the whole, the early settlement of Algeria found little favour with the officials, and was killed by the Arab insurrection of 1839-1840, by which time the official settlers included 316 families.<sup>77</sup>

It was not until Bugeaud's years that settlement received any real impetus, though his period (1841-1848) saw a great variety and scope of experiments. His basic policy was for military settlement,—“by

<sup>77</sup> Burdeau Report, 1892, p. 65. This early period is covered in two works by de Beaudicourt, 1856 and 1860.



sword and plough," "*Ense et aratro.*"<sup>78</sup> He wanted to people the Sahel with soldier-colonists, who were to have both the discipline of soldiers and the initiative of private settlers; the first would result in economy of effort and consistent action, and the latter would give them some tangible goal, something which would benefit them as individuals. The plan was to combine the benefits of a mechanical system with the resilience of individual effort, and was deemed to be especially suitable to the conditions of a land where the settler might at any instant have to take up his musket to defend his lands.

Unfortunately for the scheme, however, it had to become exclusively military or not at all so, because the contemplated merging of a settler in two functions, now soldier, now civilian, did not work; and gradually the element of compulsion came to the fore. Moreover, local opinion was hostile and the government mediocre, so that the promising scheme was nipped in the bud. The stress by this time was on free settlers, and something like a boom set in. In the single year of 1844, 46,000 settlers came, and, after the economic crisis which accompanied the revolution of 1848, some thousands of revolutionaries came to carefully prepared plots of land. Though they founded what are still the citadels of rural population (for instance, round Medea and Mostaganem), the results were disproportioned to the efforts, largely because of the unsuitability of many of the settlers and the lack of precaution against cholera: and, by some curious connection, the reverses came to involve a reaction against all assisted colonization.<sup>79</sup>

Neither the hasty settlement of the thirties, nor Bugeaud's experiments of the forties, nor the peasant-proprietorship idea of 1848, had succeeded, despite the varying degrees of State-aid in each: so that Napoleon III deemed that this experience was sufficient to demonstrate the economic absurdity of such an extension of State activities. Therefore, sales were introduced in 1860, and, three years later, the Emperor wrote that official colonization had failed beyond the possibility of doubt.<sup>80</sup> He held that there should be no small settlement under Algerian conditions and that the natives should do all the work of agriculture, with the Europeans only as *seigneurs* or *entrepreneurs*. This system, though it pertained at later dates in Tunisia and Indo-China, was, however, "ideological myopia" in so far as Algeria was concerned, with its climate and the natives. Nevertheless, Napoleon persisted in it, and, by a decree of December, 1864, absolutely forbade grants in the future. Sale without

<sup>78</sup> Examined at length in V. Démontès, *La Colonisation Militaire sous Bugeaud* (1917).

<sup>79</sup> de Peyerimhoff, Vol. I, p. 20 *et seq.*

<sup>80</sup> Letter of 6/2/63 to MacMahon, *Lettre sur la Politique française en Algérie*.

conditions was to be the exclusive method of alienation : that is, capitalists alone were to be attracted to the Algerian field, and with this went a notion of Arab serfdom,—so far had the "Arab Kingdom" idea been forgotten.

As events turned out, however, the new plan proved to be null and void. It was supposed to be an adaptation of the Wakefield plan to French conditions : "It is the Wakefield plan," wrote de Peyerimhoff in his monumental survey of Algerian settlement, "transported intact from a new, empty, and limitless country, to an old country which is relatively limited and already occupied."<sup>81</sup> In reality, it was nothing of the kind, for it lacked the essential concept of reserving the proceeds of land-sales for immigration or other public purposes. What the principle of 1864 stood for was a negation of State responsibility in settlement, and a reliance on unaided individual effort. The result was that the sixties saw a period of decline in Algeria. The forties had been the heyday of settlement, and even in the fifties, when official plans were more restrained, the general economic development had increased the rural population from 30,000 to 100,000. On the other hand, in the sixties, the position was not even maintained, and the agricultural population declined 10 per cent., for the cessation of grants had meant a practical ban on immigration.

That was the position when the Republic was proclaimed in 1870. Official colonization had once more sprung into popular favour as a result of the collapse of Napoleon III's schemes ; and there was a strong belief that grants meant population, while sales involved alienation without adequate return. There were 129,998 Frenchmen and 115,516 foreigners in Algeria, but only 90,000 resided in the rural districts. Settlement, which to 1856 had been limited to the coast, was now definitely going inland : already the high-plains were being settled, and progressive spirits were looking even to the first outskirts of the mountain *massif*.

But there was a spirit of uncertainty, of baffled effort, largely occasioned by the decline of the agricultural population under Napoleon III and by the series of famines and diseases after 1866 : and this indefinable *malaise* continued for almost a decade of the Republican period. Then, too, the Republicans pinned their faith to large schemes which were to transform the face of the land suddenly : the psychology of 1848 was revived, and naturally, when it did not square with the facts, disillusion and the consequent neglect of Algeria resulted. The Government sought to solve two of its difficulties at once : it had thousands of dispossessed Alsatians who had declared for the tricolour but who had nowhere to live, and it had Algeria where, for ten years at least, land had been

<sup>81</sup> de Peyerimhoff, Vol. I, p. 37.

abandoned, and the number of settlers declining. Why not join the two, take the surplus to the gap, and at once provide for French loyalists and allay the Algerian decline?

In June, 1871, therefore, the National Assembly set aside 100,000 hectares of land in Algeria for loyalists.<sup>82</sup> French public opinion was once more inflamed about the land, and the pessimism was swept aside in a moment, and replaced by a zeal which was quite as irrational. This was not a mere economic experiment: it was Algeria *redivivus*, the growth of a new French race overseas, a ban on the cosmopolitan experiments of the sixties, an extension of the homeland, and the vindication of France! And what could mere economic facts avail against this laudable patriotic emotion? What happened was that 877 families were installed at a cost of £260 each; but they were installed, not on the land, but to swell an already over-large urban population. The results were clearly disappointing: the colonists were hopeless and mediocre, and practically drifted to small posts in retail-trade or the civil service. The best that could be said was that they provided "human capital" for the land, and that, if they failed in agriculture, that at least added to the French element in Algeria.

Part and parcel of the same optimism was the decree of September 30, 1878, which regulated settlement for twenty-six years, and under which the experiment known as "official colonization" proper took place.<sup>83</sup> This set up a system of conditional grants in official villages, and thus embodied the two basic concepts of Algerian land-policy,—grants to attract small settlers, and official control to prevent fraud. Land could be obtained free, on condition that the grantee resided on his block for three years and improved it to the extent of 100 francs per hectare. It was really the American homestead-system, save that the scope of selection was restricted to certain group-positions. Two factors accounted for the establishment of such a scheme in 1878: in this year, the individual and general sequestrations of rebel land were practically completed, and thus half a million hectares were lying idle for the administration to utilize: and, on the other hand, a hardier and more suitable class of settlers than the untrained Alsatians were at hand. *Phylloxera* had stricken the vines of France, and the vigneron, trained for generations in this culture, were looking for new fields of activity,—chiefly to the Mitidja lands, where the capabilities of vine-growing were even then being demonstrated. Every factor seemed to combine, but the most significant was the ineradicable hold of *phylloxera* in the Rhone valley: to this fact, more than to any other, was the effective settlement of Algeria in the eighties and nineties due. France's misfortune was

<sup>82</sup> de Peyerimhoff, Vol. I, p. 41 *et seq.*    <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 184 *et seq.*

Algeria's opportunity, and trained practical men came to build up a new staple and to make permanent the settlement of the rich northern Tell. Thus it was that, in the seventies and eighties, official colonization was at the height of its success, and the rural population increased to 198,985 persons,—and, what was more important than a mere increase in the aggregate, the population of Frenchmen was gaining on that of foreigners. There was not only *peuplement*, but a *peuplement* becoming increasingly national. In addition, the new settlers were not content to stop in the Tell, not daunted even by the Kabylie *massif*, but pushed on past the Atlas and attacked the Upper Plateaux, where the Roman remains showed what could be done and where the rapid development of the colony of Tehezza provided a model.

But, to counteract this forward movement, various difficulties emerged, especially the perennial shortage of land. The sequestrations had been mainly in the district between Algiers and Constantine, and were speedily absorbed, so that, by 1882, the public domain was restricted to 848,000 hectares, less than a ninth of which was suitable for purposes of settlement. The colonization of the seventies had absorbed 400,000 hectares, and there was little left. Accordingly, the idea of "expropriation" came to the fore: this was the first time the word had been used (*cantonnement*, a more discreet term, had been previously in use): and now it was put forward as the fundamental assumption on which Algerian settlement depended. A few inexorable facts made wholesale expropriation inevitable, unless there was to be stagnation, for the natives would neither sell nor utilize their land to the degree required.<sup>84</sup>

In April, 1881, therefore, the Waldeck-Rousseau Ministry advanced the famous "Fifty Millions" scheme, to utilize that number of francs in buying enough land for 15,000 new families. The rural population had increased 50 per cent. in the previous decade; the scheme of 1878 was in full swing; immigrants were offering as quickly as they could be absorbed; all that was lacking was land,—yet land, and good land, was there in abundance, locked up by what the French viewed as the prejudice of a truculent body of uneducated natives. The scheme of 1881 found strong support in Algeria and from the French Government; but it came to grief on that somewhat unreasoning strain of humanitarianism which was for ever cropping up, usually at particularly inauspicious moments, in French colonization. The Society for the Protection of Aborigines stepped into the breach and insisted that the proposed plan meant the practical annihilation of thousands of natives, who were to be forced back into the desert, resourceless, to make way for immigrants, and, if past experience counted for anything, for South Europeans and

<sup>84</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 30/5/79.

for persons already resident in Algeria. It was a death penalty by starvation for the dispossessed tribes, and, argued the reformers, more to swell the already swollen estates of Algerian landlords than anything else! They thus advanced two arguments,—that the scheme meant spoliation of the natives (for the proposed monetary compensation did not make up for the resultant disintegration), and that, moreover, it would be economically futile. But the first argument provided the real battle-ground and, because France did not want what was called “an Algerian Ireland,” the proposal was ultimately rejected in 1883.<sup>85</sup>

The result of this rebuff was a considerable slackening of official colonization, and, for a time, a general paralysis seemed to have attacked Algerian settlement. There were only 2,000 new colonists from 1881 to 1885, and the number was dwindling. Settlement appeared once more to be in a state of atrophy, and the theorists, having killed the grant-project of 1881, experimented in various directions. One d’Haussonville proposed what was really the Wakefield plan,—a million hectares to be sold, and the proceeds to go to the expenses of colonization: and the Government for its part dabbled with the idea of “a Colonization Bank and sales only” (because such banks had been useful in the sugar-islands), but the Bill took five years to pass the Senate and never reached the Deputies. Theory seemed to have lost itself in a maze of irrelevancies, but all the time, official colonization on the basis of conditional grants was proceeding, supplemented at times by sales. But the old vim of the late seventies found no counterpart at this date, and throughout the nineties, largely as a result of the official hesitancy, only 2,052 lots were granted, and the rural population actually declined to 189,164. The position was clearly undesirable, and whether because official colonization had been too closely adhered to, or because too many deviations from it had been sanctioned in the last few years, land-settlement was on the down-grade, for many years before the change of 1904 came about.<sup>86</sup>

Taking these decades as an entity, the question arises,—what were the actual results of official settlement? In the first place, it had led to a vast increase in the agricultural population. Whether this would have taken place independently of the policy, and whether it was secured in the cheapest possible and the most effective manner, are other questions: but the fact of an increased *peuplement* was undoubted. In 1871 barely 100,000 people were on the land in Algeria; twenty years later, there were 198,985. The intensive agriculture of the Mitidja plain was a

<sup>85</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 4/4/81; see debates in Deps., 16/11/83, 28-29/12/83. Rejected by 249 to 211.

<sup>86</sup> Labiche Report, 1896, *op. cit.* (see comment by Wahl in *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, 1/5/97); de Peyerimhoff, Vol. I, p. 52 *et seq.*

model for North Africa, there was a flourishing vine-industry, and the officially created villages had penetrated even to the Upper Plateaux. In them, 13,301 French families had been installed between 1871 and 1895, 42·5 per cent. of them from France itself, the rest from Algeria. The area they occupied covered 643,546 hectares, and 11,000 had obtained definitive or final titles. Only 5,184 of the original grantees, it is true, remained on the land ; but, taking into account their families and the new settlers who had taken the places of the others, the effective *peuplement* amounted to 54,314 persons. That is, 9,556 families had been installed for 81 million francs, and less than 3,000 of them from France ! There, in a nutshell, are the results of " official colonization."

CHART TO SHOW PROGRESS OF SETTLEMENT IN ALGERIA

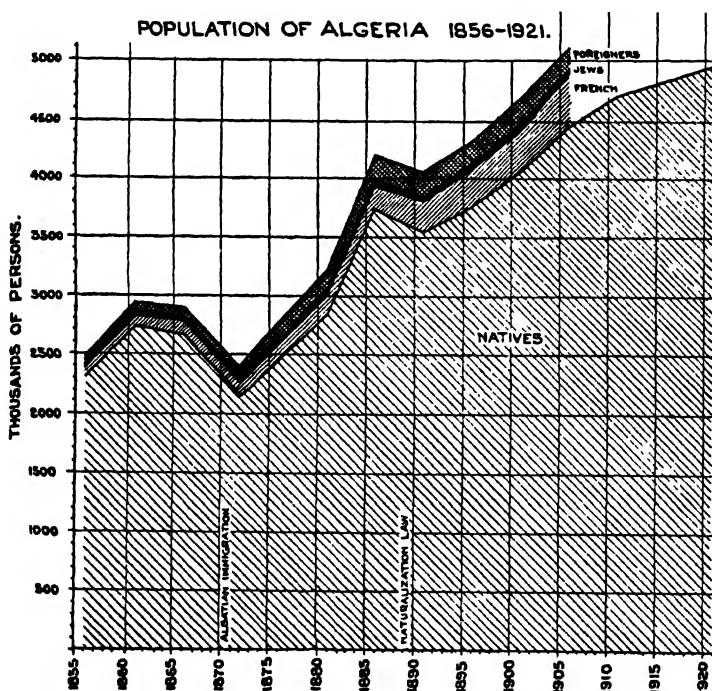
	Official Towns.	Grants.	Rural Population.	French.	Foreigners.
1831-1841. Initial experiments .	—	—	2,580	15,947	20,230
1841-1851. Boom . . . . .	126	15,000	40,913	65,497	65,233
1851-1861. Moderation . . . .	85	11,000	44,045	103,322	76,330
1861-1871. Decline . . . . .	21	—	100,000	129,998	115,516
1871-1881. Moderate official colonization . . . . .	264	8,642 (lots)	145,710	195,418	181,354
1881-1891. Height of official colonization . . . . .	—	3,206	198,985	267,672	233,179
1891-1900. Stagnation of official settlement . . . . .	103	2,052	189,164	364,257	245,853

(Note the slow development of the rural population after 1871.)

De Peyerimhoff, in his detailed inquiry into the results of the experiment, concluded from these facts that " official colonization " had amply justified itself, for, while not minimizing the wasteful effort and the various unsatisfactory tendencies, he was convinced that the expenditure had been more than justified by the *peuplement* it had led to. According to him, a rural population was successfully installed,—artificially, it must be admitted, but none the less definitely : and, moreover, the official centres of colonization were so many nuclei for the spread of French influence,—“ seminaries of our race,” and thus could do much to counteract the increasing influence of foreigners. This policy, he holds, had given Algeria a European population almost twice that of South Africa and two-thirds that of New Zealand. And, as a result, the conquest had been peaceful and definitive, and the economic development of the country precipitated. The effective rural population had

been increased or retarded in proportion to the adherence to, or the deviations from, the policy of "official colonization" and free-grants—and de Peyerimhoff purported to prove his contention by a detailed analysis of the statistics.<sup>87</sup>

But the weakness of his position was in attributing all increases in the period under review to the operation of the policy, thus minimizing or neglecting such spontaneous or natural development as may have been



going on at the same time, and independently of the official policy. He postulates a causal relationship between "official colonization" and the economic transformation of the country, ignoring the fact that much of the latter may have been independent of, or frankly in spite of, the former. A logical proposition cannot be inverted in this manner, for the predicate is more inclusive than the subject. He was justified in urging that rural population was stagnant during the imperial period of "economic (that is, free) colonization" (1862-1872) and rapidly increased in the first years of "official colonization" (1872-1882), because the optimism which

<sup>87</sup> de Peyerimhoff, Vol. I, pp. 201-202.

produced the increase of 58 per cent. in the latter period was part and parcel of the official scheme. But, beyond 1882, so complex were the many interactions and so diverse the factors affecting the situation that he cannot logically see cause and effect between the official policy and the economic progress of the country. Indeed, as the opposing school under Burdeau contended, the progress might have been achieved by the triumph of one set of factors over another, with "official colonization," partly, if not wholly, affecting progress adversely. In brief, the causes of the general progress were manifold, and could not be attributed, even in the bulk, to any one policy; the only general factor that could be adduced was a kind of *Zeitgeist*, a natural feeling that the fifty years of barren experiments had passed and that now was the time for consolidated advance.

Much criticism was directed at the official policy along these lines, especially during the reforming wave of the early nineties, when every sphere of Algerian activity was subjected to a ruthless, perhaps an unduly ruthless, analysis. The Burdeau Report of 1892, in particular, mustered the arguments of the reform school. Burdeau, who stood for solid and gradual reform on the old official lines, summed up in favour of the element of official control in the old scheme, but declared for sales as against grants. Free enterprise was to be fostered to a greater degree, and credits for colonization purposes to be commensurately reduced. He deprecated the prevalent inertia, the lapse of lands to local settlers as against immigrants, and the general inefficiency of the system: indeed, in the Deputies, he went further and called all settlement in Algeria "an abortive work."<sup>22</sup>

Going into details, the reformers held that the policy of "official colonization" was unreasonably costly. Burdeau, by neglecting the local settlers acquired, reached the figure of 15,000 francs for every French family installed on the land: Leroy-Beaulieu reduced this to 7,465.50 francs per family: de Peyerimhoff, by deducting such public works as would have been inevitable had the settlers not come (a somewhat dubious procedure), brought it as low as 1,000 francs a person. But, from his figure over the whole period, the cost per family effectively settled, whether immigrant or local, was really 8,494 francs. Seeing that there was practically no transportation-cost, this was unduly high, and de Peyerimhoff himself hastened to emphasize the inefficiency and the positive waste that characterized the whole period. The system was, by its nature, an extravagant one, and was made doubly so by the methods employed and the absence of effective checks, which in turn were due to the subordination of everything Algerian to the Paris *bureaux*.

<sup>22</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 5/12/91; Burdeau Report, 1892, pp. 62, 306.



Moreover, even putting aside this unsatisfactory financial aspect, the degree of successful settlement was very low. When 8,117 settlers of an original number of 13,301 either abandoned their lots or transferred their holdings, the upshot could not be termed successful, and still less so if it is remembered that the policy, especially aimed at attracting settlers from France, drew only 3,000 effective families of settlers altogether, and these mostly from the poor mountain-regions of the Cevennes, Dauphiny, and Savoy! There was far too much transfer both before getting the definite title (the failure to prevent this was an inexplicable defect) and after the title was once acquired; it is amazing to find that at least 62 per cent. of the holdings changed hands before the end of the probationary period.<sup>69</sup> Naturally, this placed a premium on the aggregation of large estates and afforded much justification for the plea of the reformers that "official colonization" in Algeria meant in the main facilities to transfer land from natives to settlers already in Algeria. The State, the natives, and the immigrants alike suffered: the Algerian Frenchmen gained. It was a fertile period for the land-speculator, and aggregation was completely unchecked.

Thus, on the whole, it is difficult to draw up a balance-sheet for this great experiment of the French in land-settlement. All that can with certainty be said is that the policy was successful before the questioning attitude of the late eighties, and undoubtedly did much to bring about the general optimism of that time regarding Algeria. But after then the adhesion to a policy of grants seems anomalous, and the results for every franc expended diminished, until the policy came to mean a mere extravagance. Yet it cannot be said that this could altogether be attributed to the policy *as a policy*, because much of the blame must have been due to the inefficient methods of administration and to the procrastination of the central government, which, instead of adhering firmly to any one policy, was fluctuating between several, and thus giving adequate support to none. Taking all in all, however, it may be said that the policy of group-settlement was inevitable in Bugeaud's time and desirable in the seventies, but became increasingly needless after that time. The idea was due rather to native truculence than to the demands of public works, and thus pertained to the earlier period of Algerian history, but was meaningless when settlement was going to the Central Atlas, as it did in the nineties. A similar argument applies to the policy of free-grants, which may have been desirable when the colony was in its early stages and when inducements had to be held out to settlers, but which was both uneconomical and unwise when there was a regular scramble for the circumscribed areas that were available

<sup>69</sup> de Peyerimhoff, Vol. I, pp. 143-148; Vol. II, pp. 482, 581.

in the years after 1870. As soon as the tendency towards aggregation of properties set in, free-grants *ipso facto* became absurd. The both aspects of the system of "official colonization" had thus lost their supports by the late eighties, and the need was clearly for restrictions on speculative ventures and for a moderate preparation of public works to serve the needs of settlement.

The nature of the problem had changed : by 1903, there were 199,434 rural Europeans in Algeria, 104,420 of whom were French ; and this fact in itself testified to the needs of the new situation, and showed that the existing policies were anomalies. Settlement had progressed from the formative to the developmental period : the chrysalis was no longer a grub, but, if not a butterfly, at least a moth, and was demanding different food from that which it used to have. The premises of the situation had changed, and the argument had to conform itself to the newer facts. Indeed, the change was long overdue, and that accounts for the wrong attribution of many flaws to "official colonization," flaws which were involved in its operation in these latter days, but which were by no means its necessary concomitants. They arose because the policy was applied after there was any need for it, and naturally they were looked on as arising from it. In short, just as many advantages not due to "official colonization" were attributed to it, so now, in its later stages, many defects, not inherently part of it, came to be linked up with it. "Official colonization" had run its course, and, while this did not imply that colonists in the new *régime* could be dumped down in the Central Atlas and left to their own resources, it at least meant that the Government's position was to be, if not diminished, certainly on different lines.

The truth of the situation seemed to be somewhere between the attitudes of de Peyerimhoff and Burdeau, but nearer the latter than the former ; therefore, some change was inevitable. This was produced by a decree of September, 1904, which changed the whole system of Algerian land-settlement and which still remains in operation. The reports of the various Commissions of Burdeau (1892), Jonnart (1892), and Labiche (1896) had clearly shown the faults of free-grants, hence the decree of 1904 decided for sale as the rule and for grants only in certain exceptional cases.<sup>90</sup> To favour personal residence, rebates were given to those settlers who themselves resided on the land, and, to prevent the previous monopolization by Algerian residents, two-thirds of all land was reserved for immigrants. To eradicate the speculators, the period of residence was extended to ten years, although there was still no ban on transfer during the probationary period and thus no real check imposed.

<sup>90</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 14/9/04 ; de Peyerimhoff, Vol. I, p. 67.

More emphasis was placed on preventing land going back to the natives than on preventing aggrandization; and the system did not provide effective prevention of abuse so much as hindrances that could be surmounted. Still, by giving priority to sales, it was a distinct advance on its predecessor of 1878, and the existence of even limited checks was an improvement. The new decree was elastic and, at the Governor-General's discretion, could be interpreted in various ways to meet differing situations; the old one had been rigid and inflexible.

In theory, the new policy aimed at helping a spontaneous colonization which, as Burdeau showed, had produced better results than the artificial settlement of the official policy; but, in practice, the new differed little from the old. The Algerian Government still firmly believed in the necessity of creating villages as forerunners of settlement, and the formation of isolated farms by enterprising individuals was still anathema to them. It was held that the presence of the Arabs on "five-sixths of the land that should belong to the State" made inevitable the preliminary steps of first defining the *douars* (tribal units) and then instituting a group-settlement at a desirable spot. Even in places like the expanding Sersou, where the settlers needed no official aid, it was stated that "the Algerian administration considers the preparation of villages as an indispensable part of its rôle, at the same time as the delimitation of the *douars*": and the facts of the situation and the arguments of economists like Leroy-Beaulieu availed not at all against this fixed conviction. Settlement in Algeria had always been by means of official villages: settlement in Algeria *would* always be by means of official villages: and that was all there was to the situation.<sup>91</sup>

Moreover, grants still remained a prominent feature of the land-policy: it seemed that a breach with the policy that had always been associated with Algeria could not be lightly effected. Consequently, between 1901 and 1907, there were only 430 lots sold to 2,504 granted, so that the new system simply resolved itself into the old one, with the addition of a few sales and a few safeguards that were not in themselves unassailable. The expected elasticity had not been given a chance: relatively twice as large an area as before was sold—that was the only change either in method or direction.

In practice, therefore, there was curiously little advance on the earlier systems, and, if the decree of 1878 was anomalous in the years before 1904, still more so was that of 1904 in the changing conditions of this century. Attention was now on the Upper Plateaux, the regions of dry-farming, and conditions here were quite different from down in the

<sup>91</sup> Piquet (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 204. Results are analysed in E. Garcin, *La Colonisation Officielle en Algérie sous le Régime du décret du 13 Septembre, 1904* (1913).

Tell and in fertile regions like the Mitidja coastal-plain. Clearly a new and vigorous policy was called for to meet the new situation, yet the administration, hampered, it is true, by the general financial problems of the war-period, gave only a lifeless continuation of the earlier policies. Up to 1922, 57,319 hectares were granted and 136,856 hectares sold under the decree of 1904, but, in all, this alienation affected only 2,345 families. The administration claims that this result is satisfactory under the abnormal conditions, and that the institution of seventy-nine new villages and the enlargement of seventy-seven old ones were all that could be expected during a period of travail in every direction.<sup>22</sup>

But there was another side to the situation. Land was passing more and more from the colonists to the natives, and the centres of colonization were becoming depopulated. In certain regions, according to the Council-General, the recent gubernatorial surveys were of dead or moribund villages: one colonist held up the procession at Mila by crying, "Voilà! I am the last of the forty El-Malah colonists. And, if you come back next year, you will no longer find me. For I shall be gone, because the administration refuses to help me find the water necessary for my food!" The legislation of 1904 is quite inadequate now, and the Council-General continually attacks the conservative attitude of the Government in interpreting it. The provision of a scope for elasticity has been unavailing, and it is evident that the decree of 1904 has resulted in a crisis of settlement, aggravated by the protracted drought after 1921.

The French settlement of Algeria cannot thus be termed a success. It is true that 200,000 rural settlers are in the land after a century of effort, but the cost has been disproportionately large, and there is an ominous drift from the country-districts. Frenchmen will not emigrate there, and capitalists are chary. The natives have been dispossessed in most of the country, but have been allowed to amass land in Kabylie, and in the main present a more formidable obstacle than ever to agricultural stability and advance. In a predominantly agricultural country, where the vagaries of the weather impart an ever-present element of uncertainty, this position has led to a state of constant crisis, and imposes so heavy a handicap that it is difficult to see how the country can rise, especially in view of the serious droughts and the general economic crisis of the post-war period.

Always, too, there is the problem of the natives divorced from their land,—“And when, in the face of the need of the new French race in Africa for expansion, we will see the native race multiply, detached from the soil and forcibly impoverished and powerless to transform itself overnight into a working population as it is, we will ask whether French

<sup>22</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Dec., 1923, p. 627.

colonization has not perhaps been a little precipitate." These lines were written by a colonial expert in 1912.<sup>93</sup> The position still holds, save that the promising structure of dry-farming that Piquet foretold on the Upper Plateaux has been practically stillborn, and the later crises have placed the European settlers in as grave a state as the natives. Agricultural Algeria consists of two disgruntled sections in a land always liable to severe droughts and without any adequate credit-facilities.<sup>94</sup> In this manner the artificial nature of French settlement there is bearing its fruit: the element of spontaneity, with its corollary of permanence, has always been lacking, and thus there has been little resilience, little power of recovery, and little adaptability with which to face and override the physical difficulties and the financial crises in a modern French colony. A Commission appointed in 1921 to investigate the problem thus found the position not only as it had been in the time of Burdeau and Jonnart, not only stagnant, but actually retrogressive, and with an additional feeling of depression foreign to the earlier periods of optimism. Algeria has swung back, and the whole problem has to be faced afresh.

### V. Problems of the Foreign Populations

One of the basic facts in Algerian matters was for long the disinclination of Frenchmen to leave their mother-country. Even when Algeria was being settled in the seventies, France had far less emigration, proportionately speaking, than any other European country. This was accounted for largely by the general equilibrium of French life: the diversity of cultures and climates and occupations was an economic safeguard, and provided scope for the great mass of Frenchmen at home, especially after 1871, when the population commenced to decline. There could be no upheaval in such a self-sufficient country as a potato-famine could occasion in Ireland or a metal crisis in Westphalia, or a cotton-failure in England. Add to this a natural disinclination of the Frenchman to change his accustomed mode of existence, and the chain is complete.<sup>95</sup> Thus it was that for long, practically the only immigrants to Algeria came from the poorer provinces of the Midi (Marseilles, Provence, Languedoc) and Corsica: here alone economic pressure exerted an inexorable influence, and, by shutting off hope, exercised a thrusting-out influence. The more stabilized districts in other parts scarcely felt

<sup>93</sup> Aynard (1912), *op. cit.*, pp. 253-254; Piquet (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 208.

<sup>94</sup> For the antagonism of sections, see the debate in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 1/6/01, after the Margueritte crisis.

<sup>95</sup> de Peyerimhoff, Vol. I, p. 12. The emigration-figures per thousand of population (1872-1881) were: France, 2; Germany, 5.5; Great Britain, 5.2; Italy, 4.0; Norway, 4.2.

the appeal of Algeria, except in such periods of unreasoning emotion as 1848 and the seventies.<sup>96</sup> Save in these periods, when an ebullient patriotism and the liberalism of revolution joined to direct mass-movements towards Algeria, the Frenchman tended either to remain tranquilly at home or to join his fellows in Lower Canada or the La Plata region.

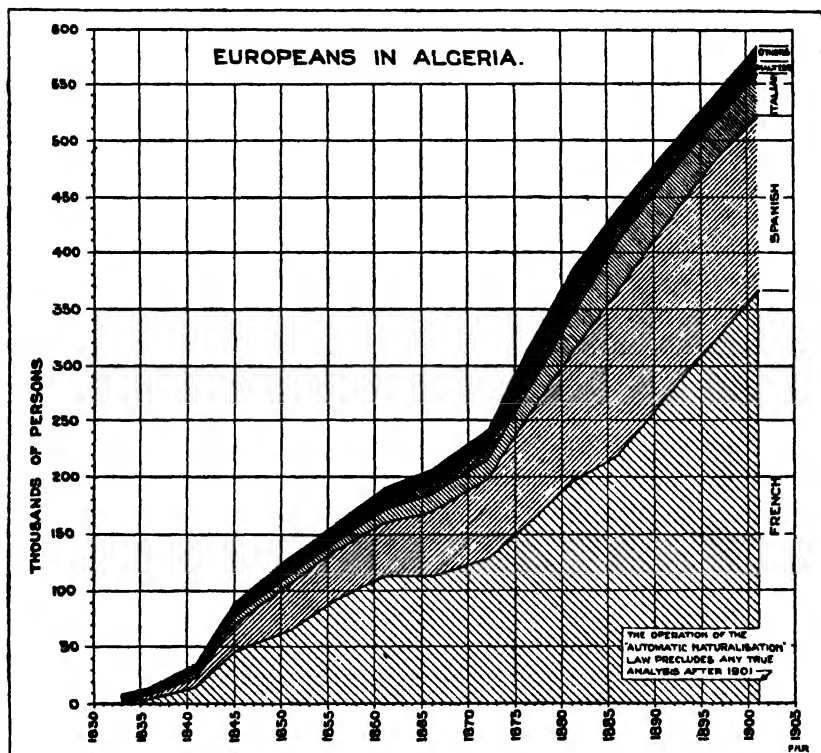
Matters were not aided, either, by the desultory attitude of the State, which now unduly promoted emigration (as at the time of the official villages in the seventies) and then hindered it. At one time (1857) 80,000 persons were sent precipitately to Algeria, and 70,000 had to be repatriated; and, at another, not sufficient inducements were held out. Everything, therefore, conspired to make Algeria depend on other than French supplies of "human capital."

Up till 1865 the death-rate had invariably exceeded the birth-rate, and it was thought that French and Germans did not prosper in the Algerian climate, and that only Italians and Spanish could acclimatize themselves. Indeed, the Southern Europeans increased more rapidly in Algeria than in their respective mother-lands, and, because both health and opportunity were offered, the foreigners poured in,—the Spaniards because the fare was only five *pesetas*, and the Italians because the economic *risorgimento* of the latter nineteenth century did not include Sicily and the south. From 1876 at least, therefore, there began a contest between French and South Europeans as to which should be numerically in the ascendant in Algeria, the increases being as follows :—

	French.	European Foreigners.	Spaniards.	Italians.
1833 . . .	3,478	4,334	1,291	1,122
1836 . . .	5,485	9,076	4,592	1,845
1841 . . .	15,497	20,230	9,748	3,528
1846 . . .	46,339	49,780	25,335	7,730
1851 . . .	67,433	65,549	41,558	7,555
1856 . . .	92,738	66,544	42,218	9,442
1861 . . .	112,229	80,517	48,145	11,815
1866 . . .	112,119	95,871	58,510	16,655
1871 . . .	129,601	115,516	71,366	18,351
1876 . . .	155,368	155,072	92,510	25,759
1881 . . .	195,418	181,354	114,320	33,693
1886 . . .	219,627	205,212	144,530	44,315
1891 . . .	267,672	215,793	151,859	30,161
1896 . . .	318,137	211,580	157,560	35,529
1908 . . .	364,257	219,587	155,265	43,871

<sup>96</sup> Map in *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, 1/9/00.

But this table does not show the real state of affairs, and, taking into account the number of naturalizations (128,925 in the figure of 1901 alone), it becomes clear that, at every census after 1832 at least, there were more foreigners than Frenchmen in Algeria. In 1896, for instance, when the census-figure ostensibly showed a 50 per cent. predominance of Frenchmen, there were really only 268,870 Frenchmen as compared with 375,138 foreigners: Spaniards dominated in many of the Oran



communes and in many parts of the department of Algiers. So too, in 1906, the census showed 449,420 Frenchmen, but, of these, only 278,976 were French-born either in France or Algeria, and the total number of foreigners was 336,642, not counting the 64,645 Jews. The enfranchisement *en masse* of the Jews by the Crémieux decree of 1870 and the operation of the automatic-naturalization law of 1889 were both utilized to obscure the real situation and artificially swell the numbers of Frenchmen; but the device was apparent, and the basic fact could not be concealed that, in these decades, Algeria had far more foreigners than Frenchmen. Thus, there was a very real foreign menace, and it was not only one of

numbers, because the foreign groups largely maintained their separate organization and traditional cultures.

Of the various foreign elements the Spanish has always been the most noticeable, and, indeed, arguing from the 1906 census, they were almost as numerous as the French, especially in the westerly province of Oran, which was their special camping-ground. They came to Algeria from the Mediterranean provinces and Andalusia, practically half of them originating in Alicante.<sup>97</sup> The agricultural crisis and the political commotions from 1870 to 1876 gave an impetus to their migration, and it is significant that practically none came from Castile. There is a general agreement as to their characteristics. Clearly they have proven the European type most suited for Algerian conditions, even more so than the Frenchmen of the Midi. They are almost as turbulent as the natives in many cases, and keep their original rusticity to a greater degree than is usual with the other ethnic elements: their *pepe* or proprietors are really slow and quaintly conservative herders, knowing little and caring little of advance or outside conditions. They are essentially a rural and static element,—useful workers, sober and resistant. In their attitude towards France they are non-committal. Obviously they do not like France and do everything to retain their own local ideas and organizations. They make practically no effort to assimilate the French culture of Algeria, but stand aside, inert and reactionary. On the other hand, they are not separatist or anti-social in their attitude. They are loyal to a "Spanish legend," but are not prepared to carry their love of the past to the stage of trying to revive it in the present form of evolution. As Louis Bertrand showed in *Le Sang des Races*, they avoid present problems by keeping their feet deep-rooted in a more or less mythical past. They view the past through rose-coloured spectacles and idealize a Spain which they were glad enough to leave a few years before, yet which they divest of all its rudeness and harshness: it is all a pleasant dream, and they do not wish it to be shattered any more than, under precisely similar conditions, a Japanese in Hawaii, revelling in an æsthetic dissipation by idealizing his home-country, desires to have his illusions shattered by the reality of returning to Japan. The Spaniards in Algeria are content to love a false Spain of yesterday, a chimera, and this gives brightness to their lives and enables them to maintain their social integrity in the new country. But that is all; their dream is a cement of society, not the basis of a revolutionary programme. There is thus no *irridentism*, and they stand aside in their own cultural past, or rather, the cultural

<sup>97</sup> V. Démontès, *Le Peuple Algérien* (1906), p. 59, 91, 522-523; Wahl (1897), *op. cit.*, pp. 233-234. Cp. article by Déchaud in *Revue de la Société de Géographie d'Oran*, 1908, p. 51.



past as they have moulded it in their own imaginations, and give to Algeria, not leaders or programmes, but only—their flocks! So that, although a humorist said, with much justice, that Algeria is the one Spanish colony that has succeeded, the Spanish colony there is a social *enclave* within a wider unity, but not as distinct from that unity. The Spanish menace, therefore, because of this peculiarly mixed and tranquil psychology, is not as real as the numerical position would seem to imply, nor is it a menace at all, so much as a problem.

With the Italians in Constantine, the difficulty is very much more real, although their numbers are less than a fourth those of the Spaniards in the West.<sup>98</sup> The trouble is that the Italians in Algeria are but a continuation of the extremely self-assertive *bloc* of their fellows in Tunisia, where they are in a majority. So that the question of the Algerians in Algeria must be viewed as part of the wider problem of the Italians along the North African littoral, the more so as there is a common bond of violent *irridentism* between them all,—a bond that is distinctly anti-French. The Italians are not only a distinct element, like the Spaniards: they have also been a disintegrating one, in a manner never shared by the more numerous Spaniards. The Spaniards are devotees of a semi-mythical past which probably never existed and which is certainly nothing to inspire concrete policies of to-day; whereas the Italians love the Italy of to-day and the irridentist Italy of to-morrow, and work for a time when Tripolitania (Libya) will include the whole North African seaboard. They are frankly separatist, and their separatism is rendered coherent by a distinct political programme. While the Spaniards are culturally and quiescently separatist, the Italians, as a mass, are politically and aggressively so.<sup>99</sup>

Practically all of the Italians come from the south, except the contingents from the over-populated Tuscany. The poorer provinces of Sicily, Calabria, and Campania were the most fertile recruiting-grounds, especially for fishermen and labourers; a few farmers came from Sardinia and miners from Lombardy, but the great majority were South Italians.<sup>100</sup> Their characteristics are very different from those of the Spaniards in Algeria; they are not so resistant physically; few of them become "patrons" or proprietors; what is the rule with the Spaniard is the exception with them, and, on the whole, they are good workmen but poor peasants, and drift naturally to filling the urban demand for skilled labour. But, above all, they are a noisy and dissident political *bloc*.

<sup>98</sup> G. Loth, *Le Peuplement italien en Algérie et en Tunisie* (1905), p. 33 et seq.

<sup>99</sup> Démontès (1906), *op. cit.*, p. 525.

<sup>100</sup> See maps in *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, 1/9/00, and article by Mandeville and Démontès in 15/8/00. Cp. Lorin (1908), *op. cit.*, p. 65.

The presence of these hundreds of thousands of Spaniards and Italians not unnaturally occasioned much disquietude throughout the closing decades of last century, and, in the intervals between the anti-Semite campaigns, there was considerable anti-foreign agitation. Writers like Lenormand spoke of "*Le Péril Étranger*," and experienced statesmen agreed with Burdeau in saying that the whole future of French Algeria was at stake. "Whatever signs of prosperity our colony appears to give otherwise," ran a much-quoted passage in the Burdeau Report of 1892, "if the French do not become sufficiently numerous to outnumber the other elements, we are dubious of its future." Again: "It is not enough that the European element increase in Algeria; in it, the French must predominate."<sup>101</sup> And this voiced the general feeling. It was a distinct menace, it was argued, to have separate language-schools for the foreigners, to have the Spaniards gradually coming to control politics in Oran province, and to have the Italians capturing every trade and linking their efforts with their Tunisian compatriots. It was not spectacular but a symptom of a grave disease to have Oran soldiers in French uniform yet knowing no language but Spanish, or to have a rising at Thala (1906) quelled by Italian workers led by a Frenchman. These things were serious, the more so because the various elements showed no sign of becoming absorbed in one wider entity.

The elements remained separate, and, rejoicing in their distinctness, rejected French overtures to lessen the gap between them. For instance, there was practically no naturalization. In all the years between 1866 and 1904, only 5,683 Europeans were naturalized—the sign of an aloofness which was ended when the law of 1889 made naturalization automatic and collective. By this means the number of French citizens was to be swollen, and the third generation of foreigners at least to come under a more immediate French influence. That the measure of 1889 was solely to this end and imposed in direct opposition to the views of those concerned was evident, because, in 1886, only 82 out of a total mass of 144,530 Spaniards, and 203 out of 44,315 Italians were naturalized.

Then, too, given the numbers involved and the shortage of women with the immigrant-stocks, there was curiously little intermarriage. In the forty-seven years after 1830, Doctor Ricoux, the demographic expert, found only 6,881 cases of foreigners marrying French citizens, and Démontès proved that this state of affairs held up to the time of his investigations in 1905.<sup>102</sup>

As a result of the two foregoing tendencies, it is only natural to pre-

<sup>101</sup> Burdeau Report, 1892, pp. 31, 37.

<sup>102</sup> Démontès (1906), *op. cit.*, pp. 543, 214-215. Cp. *L'Afrique Française*, July, 1923, p. 397, for continuance of this.

suppose a great degree of localism, and it is precisely this inordinate localism which has always characterized North Africa. "North Africa," it has been said, "is a country of division, and especially of regional opposition"; provincial egotism reigns everywhere, and the greatest difficulty in the way of communal advance is this intestine division. The Boissierin inquiry of 1900 reported "that there exists in Algeria the germs of an undeniable and avowedly particularist spirit," and this remark applied as much to each province as to the entity. Algeria seemed to be splitting into three sections, each a distinct province, Oran was clearly a Spanish colony, Algiers a French stronghold, and Constantine a prolongation of "Italian Tunisia." The differences between these provinces, supported as they were by geography, seemed far stronger than the bonds between them, and the only cohesion was by the common wall of recalcitrant natives in the interior.

On the other hand, certain optimistic features could be discerned. In the first place, the emergence of an all-Algerian particularism, as against the mere provincial separatism, was a hopeful sign, at least in that it was based on a postulate of Algerian unity. A sign of this was said to be the emergence of "a neo-French race" in Algeria, a race distinct from the French of the mainland, and influenced both by the Algerian environment and the various ethnic elements in the country. "In the amalgamation which is taking place, the French blood represents the intellectual yeast, the *bouquet*; and the blood of the Latin races is bringing to the ultimate type a physique better suited to the Southern climate, greater resistance and less *finesse*." <sup>103</sup>

French spirit and Mediterranean physique,—that is how France views the change: Réclus goes even further and predicts "an Algerian race" with the above components and Arab and Berber elements in addition. However this may be, there is no doubt that a distinct Algerian type, a distinct Algerian mentality, is emerging; and the difference between an Algerian colonist of the Upper Plateaux and a Parisian is more marked than that between a Riverina bushman of Australia and a Londoner.

Then, too, it is recognized that Algeria is not alone in possessing various racial *enclaves*. Why complain of the Italians of Constantine when Nice and Toulon and Marseilles and Tourcoing are becoming less and less French,—when Marseilles alone has 100,000 Italian-born foreigners and at least an equal number of first and second generation children, to whom the automatic operation of the law of 1889 has given French nationality? And, as Jaurès said in defending the bitterly attacked Crémieux decree of 1870, it is "the worst moral failure" for a country like France to admit that 50,000 Jews could not be incorporated

<sup>103</sup> Lorin (1908), p. 381; de Peyerimhoff, Vol. I, pp. 171-173.

within the national spirit,—and a similar argument applies, only with more force, to the Spanish and Italians.<sup>104</sup> By that, he meant that France has a cultural preponderance and that she could readily assimilate the extraneous elements which were not in themselves unassimilable, and of whom the Spanish at least, far and away the most important element numerically, were not opposed to such a consummation. In addition, it must be remembered that such problems are not concerned only with statistics; were that so, life in some of the confused racial *enclaves* of the Balkans or in an ethnographical laboratory like Hawaii would be clearly impossible. It is the spirit and prestige of the various elements in the community that count even more than their respective numbers, and here the French emerge well. France has practically an unquestioned economic and social preponderance in Algeria, and, even if we conclude with Démonetès that her numerical preponderance is “seriously menaced,” this fact more than counteracts the numerical loss. Thus, on the whole, it can be said that there is an ever-present problem in Algeria, and that it is potentially a menace, if French policy should develop on such lines as to foster the conversion of the cultural separatism of the foreigners into a political separatism,—and this is why the Italians are a danger and the Spaniards only a difficulty.

The passage of the years in nowise lessens the difficulty, save in the census-reports, which are practically useless for showing the situation, except as between Europeans and natives. But, even according to the census, the utility of which is largely vitiated by the naturalization law of 1889, and since 1919, by the wholesale admission of native Algerians to the privileges of French citizenship, the position has been as follows :—

	Natives.	French.	European Foreigners.	Spaniards.	Italians.	Jews.
1906 . .	4,477,788	449,420	166,198	144,328	31,927	64,645
1911 . .	4,711,276	562,931*	189,112	135,150	36,795	70,271
1921 . .	4,971,424	405,208	192,159	144,328	31,927	73,967

\* Including Jews.

It should be noted, too, that already in 1906, a third of the so-called Frenchmen were foreigners or Jews, and there is no reason to suppose that the entries through the naturalization gate have been diminishing since then: rather would the automatic process gather more with the passage of the years. At present, then, it is impossible to disentangle

<sup>104</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Dets., 20/2/98.

the Algerian census-returns, although it must be emphasized that the position is not that represented in the official statistics.

Algeria's race-problems are very real, although, apart from the anti-Semitic agitations, it is astonishing how little racial friction there has been. The position at present is that the various elements agree to differ: and it would be folly either to ignore these differences or to attempt a hasty assimilation to one standard (moreover, it is not known what would be the standard in such a hypothetical case,—French or Franco-Algerian or a blended French-Mediterranean culture?): the only *via media* is to recognize and allow certain differences of culture, and even of organization, so long as they do not become anti-social or inimical to the central power. As Governor-General Jonnart, with his forty years of Algerian experience, said in opening the *Délégations Financières* in 1919 <sup>105</sup>:

"We cannot nourish the illusion of creating a common soul in Algeria. But we have the duty and the wish to let diverse races live side by side, and prosper by means of the association of interests, which will augment individual relations, lessen prejudices, and lead to generations better able to understand and more desirous of a true accord."

This position neither minimizes the difficulties nor disguises the existing rancour: yet, on the other hand, it allows a gradual evolution on the lines of the policy of *association*, which the French have adopted in dealing with native races. In brief, it is development along the lines of Waldeck-Rousseau's famous maxim of 1901,—that, wherever there is difference in culture and tradition and organization and ideals, the best solution of the difficulty is for a healthy parallel development of the various civilizations, each on its own lines, and to the utmost degree compatible with general social security. That is the only way, short of domination by one element, of reconciling the various races in Algeria.

## VI. Economics

Algeria is primarily an agricultural country, and even then of a very definite nature. Her *développement* is very limited in its scope. Industry is practically non-existent: there were only 23,584 workers in factories in 1917, and, despite the development of the woollen industry between Kabylie and M'Zab in the last few years, there seems little to be hoped for in the way of an indefinite expansion along these lines. Coal is completely lacking, and the country provides only iron and copper and phosphates. Everything, therefore, by this process of elimination, comes to depend on agriculture,—on the production of vines and temperate cereals. Even the potentialities in that direction are strictly

<sup>105</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, May-June 1919.

limited by various inexorable factors. The supply of good land or even utilisable land is a small proportion of the whole, for the desert and the mountains limit it to a coastal strip which, to all intents and purposes, cannot pass the Upper Plateaux.<sup>106</sup> Much of such land as would be available, too, has been locked up by the native-policy of the past and cannot be released for purposes of settlement without violent native opposition.

At this point the climate plays a hand, for Algeria has always been subject to severe and protracted droughts, which paralyse the country's activities for a period of years. To make matters worse, in a country like the Dry-lands of Utah or the Australian Mallee, where dry-farming and capitalistic methods are called for to reduce the inequality of the struggle as decreed by Nature, agriculture is, on the contrary, notoriously backward, and, as far as the natives are concerned, still in the patriarchal stage. Capital is chary of the colony, which was for long regarded as a treacherous desert eagerly mopping up outside capital and leaving the desert-sands as unruffled as before: and the labour-position was equally unsatisfactory, for there were never more than from four to five million aloof natives, and the Spaniards and Italians stuck respectively to their flocks and the cities.

As a result of the total of these limiting factors, Algerian development has been within certain well-marked limits, and any attempt to transcend the boundaries decreed by Nature, as during the boom of the seventies or the optimism of 1911 or the unusual conditions of the war-period, inevitably brought a reaction, and a more than equivalent payment.

The country is thus a limited agricultural region, with many factors obscuring the advantages conferred by its temperate climate and its proximity to France. Practically every feature of its economic life is on a farming basis, and the agricultural situation is always the *primum mobile* of matters Algerian. In 1920, for instance, even after a succession of prosperous years, a bad crop meant deficits in the budgets of 1920 and 1921, because the yield of taxation varied directly with rural prosperity: trade and commerce declined and the banking crisis was aggravated: and even the general political *malaise* was intensified. For at least four years the normal trend of evolution was rudely shattered,—another reminder of the country's dependence on a single line of activity, and the constant element of uncertainty, and almost menace, implied in that dependence.<sup>107</sup>

Because of this situation, the country depends on producing crops and transporting them to their markets. On the one hand, therefore,

<sup>106</sup> de Peyerimhoff, Vol. I, p. 116, note.

<sup>107</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Feb. 1922, p. 106.

Algeria's destiny depends on an adequate supply of labour and credit and a comparative absence of droughts (there can never be an absolute freedom from this scourge, the land being what geography has made it), and, on the other, on railways and shipping. Indeed, the two latter, owing to the various peculiarities of French policy in this regard, are far more important in reality than a theoretical argument would have us suppose, especially in the case of shipping, where the laws providing for a French monopoly have imposed grave limits on the already limited list of potentialities. And, as for railways, Gabriel Hanotaux has said with justice that "all Algerian questions lose themselves in railways, like rivers in the sea." Given the bounds imposed by Nature, Algerian matters thus come down to problems of production and problems of transportation, and it is a significant commentary on the country's position, both past and present, that most of the discussion on these matters is in terms of difficulties and not advantages.

The general development of the colony, and incidentally the difficulties perennially encountered, are best shown in a survey of the external commerce, for which the data is very full. The most striking feature in this connection is that Algeria has never had a permanently favourable trade-balance,—and this in a country in which the total amount of exports has been the gauge of the country's prosperity. In an agricultural country which depends on the world-market and which imports all of its manufactured goods, the predominance of exports over imports is the measure of the country's credit-balance: to suppose the contrary would be to have its debts greater than its receipts, save in those early years of a colony when there are unusual imports of materials of construction for public works. Once established, however, a solely agricultural colony, with a small resident population, should have its agricultural exports increasingly in excess of its manufactured imports. Yet Algeria has in the main known practically the reverse. Until 1904, exports were invariably below imports, save in the exceptional years of 1872–1873.<sup>100</sup> In all, even taking into account the war-years, when the unrestricted market favoured Algerian agricultural produce, the colony has had only ten years with a favourable trade-balance. And the lesson pointed to is the more real, because Algeria is not a country like Indo-China where external trade reflects only one side of the situation and where an abnormal amount of internal commerce, due largely to the presence of an overwhelming native population, has to be taken into account. The external trade of Algeria, on the other hand, is of itself practically a barometer of the country's position, for Algeria

<sup>100</sup> L. Lusinski, *Étude sur les Relations commerciales et maritimes entre l'Algérie et la France* (1922), p. 27.

sells mainly, almost exclusively, in outside markets and buys from them.

The general development of Algerian trade may be seen from the table :—

	Imports. (Millions of Francs.)	Exports.
1830-1840 (av.)	15	2.1
1841-1850 (av.)	71.9	3.7
1851-1860 (av.)	80.8	31.1
1861-1870 (av.)	172.6	81.6
1878 . . .	236	131.6—note increased imports.
1882 . . .	411.9	150.0—abnormal imports for South Oran rising.
1886 . . .	221.1	196.4—decline of "official colonization."
1890 . . .	—	— —falling-off of public works.
1894 . . .	283.1	245.7
1898 . . .	302.2	285.7
1902 . . .	332.7	315.0
1906 . . .	424.9	303.8—after the droughts.
1910 . . .	543.1	544.9—equilibrium.
1914 . . .	566.8	427.6

From this it will be seen that there was a steady, if slow, development of exports, and a fluctuating import trade, dependent on the amount of public works at the time and on the prosperity or otherwise of the immediately preceding agricultural seasons. In the main, however, a normal position pertained after the boom of public works in the heyday period of "official colonization" (1875-1886), and, although the quietness after 1904 partook largely of the nature of stagnation, it was at least natural, and the country was gradually developing. After the setback of various prolonged droughts, this stagnation changed to a somewhat more rapid progress, and, by 1914, exports in normal years were coming fairly close to imports. Stabilization of a favourable balance, if not achieved, was in sight, and the exception heretofore (having been known only in six years) promised to become the rule. If limited, development was becoming healthier, and it must always be remembered that, in a pre-eminently agricultural country of this type, rapid or cataclysmic advance is a sign of weakness rather than the contrary, for in such cases it is the quiet progressive consolidation that counts. It must be admitted, however, that the increase in trade was disappointingly slow. In 1882, Leroy-Beaulieu had forecast a commerce of 1,000 million francs in 1890 and 2,000 million in 1900, whereas, in reality, the totals were less than 546 and 566 millions, and, in the intervening period, there had been neither expansion nor even a changed proportion of exports and imports within the total. Under the circumstances, taking into account the increased population, this was tantamount to retrogression, the more



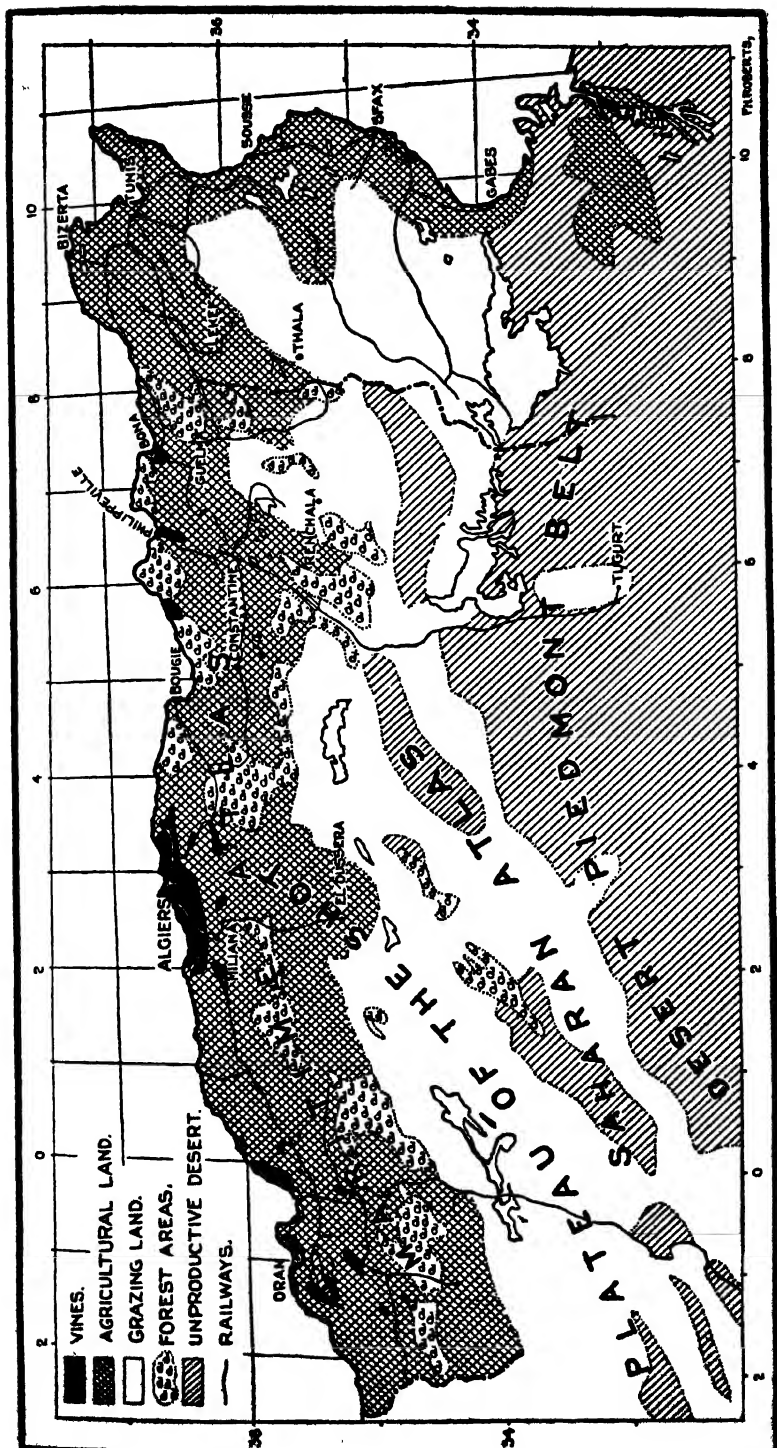
so, because there was a permanent budget deficit. Only from 1904 could the position be termed satisfactory, and, even then, it was a satisfied mediocrity. The total trade certainly increased from about half a milliard francs to a milliard and a quarter in the fourteen years after 1900, but the average figure was nearer a milliard, and it remained to be seen whether the advance since 1904 was permanent or merely transitory.

The war had the effect of giving a premium to agricultural production, and, in short, provided the paraphernalia of a boom period. Nevertheless, in the seven years after 1914, only four saw a preponderance of exports: even the artificial stimulus, in a word the ultra-protection of war conditions, did not avail to place Algerian production on a sound footing, while the preoccupation of France elsewhere allowed foreigne to capture and increase the import-trade,—perhaps the most characteristic phenomenon of Algerian commerce during the war-period. Trade, therefore, developed as follows:—

	Imports.	Exports.	
	(Millions of Francs.)		
1914 . .	566·8	427·6	
1915 . .	544·3	619·1	
1916 . .	—	632·0	
1917 . .	—	708·0	
1918 . .	—	—	
1919 . .	1,357	1,770—franc @ average of 35 to £1.	
1920 . .	2,535	1,441	” ” ” ” 50
1921 . .	1,932	1,397	” ” ” ” 62·5
1922 . .	2,007	1,379	” ” ” ” 62·5
1923 . .	2,568	1,868	” ” ” ” 75
1924 . .	3,188	2,206	” ” ” ” 88
1925 . .	3,275	2,404	

Imports thus continued to gain on exports, and, discounting the depreciation of the franc, there was still a disappointingly small development of the total trade. The steady growth of 1904–1914, instead of being provided with an impetus, was shattered by the unusual conditions, and was not recovered after the peace because of the combination of financial distress, currency problems, and a protracted sequence of bad seasons.

So it comes about that Algerian commerce is as precarious as ever, and that, apart from the ten years of quiet development before 1914, there has been practically no satisfactory period. Either imports were unduly enlarged for purposes of public works, as during the period of “official colonization,” or there was a veritable stagnation, as in the twenty years after the decline of official settlement: there was no period of steady or healthy consolidation before 1904 or after 1914, and therein is the tragedy of Algerian development, especially because the fore-



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ordained limits imposed on her development make a gradual building-up the very essence of progress. Algeria, to the contrary, has known no stability, and the commerce-statistics are the best barometer for gauging the unhealthy and spasmodic nature of last century's development. Instead of a normal growth, Algeria has been subject to a disease; now flushed by a deceptive rally (of itself weakening and a testimony of abnormal conditions), now relapsing again into decline, but usually stagnant, neither progressing nor declining. So that, after all, its commerce is the history of a medical case rather than a barometer.

#### AGRICULTURE

It is to be expected that agriculture, the basic determinant of trade in such a country of primary industries, would reflect the conditions mirrored in the statistics of commerce, and this is exactly the case. Commerce and rural production have had practically parallel histories: both are simply the same tale told from different angles. Until 1870, indeed until 1885, agriculture in Algeria was confined to a narrow coastal-strip, chiefly round Algiers and Oran. The Maritime Atlas were as yet untouched, nor had development even in the coastal Tell assumed a specialized local form. There had simply been a desultory series of experiments, in everything from temperate cereals to cotton and indigo.

The first definitive stage in Algeria's rural development came with the introduction of the vine-industry in the coastal-belt. Between 1880 and 1895, the industry was implanted, and success was immediate. The 9,800 hectares planted with vines in 1871 had swollen to 130,000 in 1895, and, despite the appearance of the dreaded *phylloxera* in the latter years of the period and the fall in prices consequent on a general over-production, the progress was continued, albeit on a more reasonable scale. By 1906, 184,000 hectares were planted, and these regions had become a second Languedoc, with viniculture the most important industry. Indeed, the Algerian wine-industry had become one-eighth the size of the French, a remarkable development in less than twenty years, and in face of the crisis of the last years of the century. The implantation of the vine-industry is the brightest spot in the history of Algeria, and, at present, 513,000 acres are so planted and produce 212,000,000 gallons of wine a year.<sup>100</sup>

The progress in the other fields of agriculture, however, has not been so marked. The reasons are many, but chiefly arise from the fact that the great bulk of Algerian agriculture has always been in the hands of the natives, who lock up the land and will not modernize their methods,

<sup>100</sup> Vignon (1888), *op. cit.*, p. 60; E. F. Gautier, *L'Algérie et le Métropole* (1920), p. 188. See table of annual output in de Peyerimhoff, Vol. I, p. 114.

thus keeping the aggregate production absurdly small for the given geographical conditions. To 1904, for instance, more than 80 per cent. of the total agricultural produce came from the natives, and one has but to know the procrastinating temperament of the *fellah*, who clings to the wooden plough and even the ploughing-stick, and pays more attention to superstitious incantations than to phosphate-manure, to understand the enormous waste involved in this state of affairs. Any attempt to reform agriculture, therefore, is stillborn unless it takes into account the native producers, and so far, neither the creation of facilities or rewards has had any chance of availing against the traditional inertia of the *fellah* and his opposition to all reforms. Taking his stand upon the attitude of untold generations of his ancestors, he rests an inert obstacle against the path of reform, and the irony of the situation is that, without him, not all the energies of the European can avail. He dominates the situation, and in his hands is the agricultural future of the land : and that explains why there has always been the gap in Algeria between scientific agriculture in theory and in practice, and why the rural position has changed so little in its essentials during the past century. The native will not change his methods in the slightest, and he will not allow others to change them for him.<sup>110</sup>

The European colonist therefore finds himself checkmated in wishing to improve the country, and indeed tends to associate himself more and more with methods akin to those of the native. Algeria has proven time out of number that, given a country of this kind and with a predominant native population on the land, the only effective system of exploitation is that pursued in Tunisia,—*grande colonisation*, or better still, the newer *moyenne colonisation*, where the Europeans are *entrepreneurs* and the natives *métayers* or tenants.

But, lacking this, Algeria paid,—in stagnation. Under the circumstances, the Europeans naturally turned to viniculture, and, although there has been a certain development of cereals, this attitude implied an inadequate emphasis on other crops. By 1924, 3,492,000 acres were in wheat and 3,157,000 in barley, especially in the Upper Tell, but the yield was relatively low. This was due largely to the "extensive" nature of farming in the Algerian soil, but primarily to the methods employed. The natives knew no progress and, too often, the Europeans adopted a policy of sub-letting their land to them (without the supervision implied in the *métayage* system),—a practice which became so noticeable that one of the aims of the land-legislation of 1904 was to prevent its increase. Instead of scientific methods coming to the fore, there tended to be a progressive levelling-down to the native standard. In

<sup>110</sup> van Vollenhoven (1903), *op. cit.*, pp. 166-168.

the years before the war, however, a marked reaction could be discerned on the part of the Government, and a Commission was sent to study the question of dry-farming in Utah, where the conditions are similar to those on the Atlas slopes.<sup>111</sup> The introduction of lucerne and the more resistant Australian grains were moves in the same direction, but there yet remained the gap between these feelers extended by the Government and the practical methods employed by the European settlers, and still more so those of the native proprietors. A Commission of Inquiry in 1868 had reported that "agriculture in Algeria is more progressive than in France," but that position certainly did not pertain forty years later, when the methods were still based on the age-old native routine followed in Morocco and Egypt and parts of India.

A similar difficulty was encountered in the pastoral industry which, from the point of view of importance, ranks second to viniculture. The great bulk of the flocks and herds have always been in native hands, the typical native occupation being a *transhumant* pastoral life, especially with sheep. As the railway has progressed, sheep have replaced camels; but despite this, the history of the Algerian pastoral industry has been chequered to a marked degree. After the boom of 1888-1889 there was a continual decline until 1901, both with sheep and cattle,—a decline almost as bad as during the great drought of 1882, and this despite the spread of pasture to new areas. The natives are at best pitiable raisers of stock, and a survey of their methods enables one to understand how the breeding of sheep and cattle has scarcely developed since 1830. Commissions appointed to investigate this deplorable state of affairs in 1914 and 1918 found no difficulty in assigning causes to the decline,—an absolute neglect of animal culture, an ignorance of the laws of heredity, a marked ineptitude on the part of herders, discouragement by droughts, the lack of a consistent and energetic service of control on the part of the Government, and, above all, "an almost complete indifference to all questions concerning animal production." The Commissions made it clear that "neither the native nor the European pastoral industry has reached the degree of development warranted by natural conditions," and that the evil was not in the droughts, not in the physical obstacles encountered, but lay far deeper in a neglectful and heedless insouciance, as much on the part of the Government as individuals.<sup>112</sup> The position, especially in view of the world demand for wool and the development of refrigeration, is remarkable, because practically all of the Shot Plateaux and the Saharan Atlas is fair pastoral country.

<sup>111</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Jan. 1911, p. 35.

<sup>112</sup> The Report of 1914 is entitled *L'Élevage en Algérie*. A better survey is H. G. Saint-Hilaire, *L'Élevage dans l'Afrique du Nord, Maroc et Tunisie* (1919).

The only important reform in this connection has been the provision of water-facilities. The first works were in 1856, and "a hydraulic policy" was constantly before the Government in the eighties. Practically a million francs a year were spent in the decade after 1873, which was the starting-point of well-sinking in the Sahara. The Wad Rir was the chief centre of the experiment, and, by doubling its population in twenty years, afforded a hopeful outlook for the policy. But once again the defects of Nature seemed to triumph: the desert, where the artesian water-supplies were of the greatest use, was by no means a promised land, and it became evident that a kindred expenditure elsewhere would produce more than commensurate returns. But nearer the coast, in the agricultural zone proper, irrigation proved to be largely out of the question, owing to the practical absence of watercourses and the extreme uncertainty of the rainfall.<sup>113</sup> As in most other agricultural spheres, therefore, pessimism came to triumph.

The Algerian position has thus resolved itself into an impossible industry, a flourishing viniculture, a backward agriculture, and a positively declining pastoral industry; and these tendencies have characterized every period of Algerian history under the French, except for brief spaces when the pastoral outlook was more hopeful. On the whole, however, in this country which must perforce depend on its rural development, the position has always been crucial, and, instead of being such as to engender a hopeful outlook, has been dominated by ever-present elements of uncertainty. The limitations of Nature made a good deal of this uncertainty inevitable, the attitude of the natives stereotyped it, and the ineffective policies of the French settlers and administration have extended its scope, the result being that it is no exaggeration to say that Algeria to-day, agricultural country as it is, is in a state of perpetual crisis.

#### COMMUNICATIONS

The actual production of agricultural commodities is thus highly uncertain from year to year: and additional problems arise when it comes to conveying the products first to the coast and then to the foreign markets. Railways and shipping are continual problems in Algerian economics. While it is possible, and more than possible, to have a breakdown somewhere in the field of production, even given adequate facilities in these directions, it is clear that not even the most fruitful seasons can avail without them. That is, there may not be progress even with railways and shipping facilities, but there certainly cannot be progress without them.

The railway-problem was complicated from the first because of the

<sup>113</sup> Hamelin, in *Dépêche Coloniale*, 1/3/09.

permanent budget-deficits and because of the chariness with which French capitalists viewed Algerian investments. But the budget-deficit and the unwillingness of the French to increase the annual subsidy to Algeria made inevitable a dependence on private enterprise: hence various conventions placed the colony's railways in the hands of five distinct companies. But, to secure their co-operation, the French Government had to guarantee the payment of interest on their capital. This obligation came to involve France in quite unexpected liabilities, because the railways ran at such a loss and the charges so accumulated that, even in the ten normal years after 1892, the companies had to be granted over 230 million francs. As a result of this position and the rivalry between the companies, the arrangement was described as "a real obstacle to the economic development of Algeria." It was costly without being efficient, and a constant complaint in Algeria was that railway facilities were inadequate. By 1900 there were only 2,400 kilometres, in a network along the coastal fringe and with one southern extension to Tuggurt.<sup>114</sup>

Therefore, a law of July, 1904, in extending Algeria's financial autonomy to the railway sphere, made arrangements for an ultimate repurchase by the State.<sup>115</sup> This objective was made more immediately possible by the intervention of the war, which proved a grave financial blow to the three surviving companies and forced one completely out of existence in 1919. A law of December, 1922, took advantage of this *contretemps* to acquire for the State a certain proportion of the Algerian railways: but it was deemed inadvisable to take over the whole, and so two systems were provided for, 2,000 kilometres to be under State-ownership and the extra 1,000 to be under a joint private company.<sup>116</sup> This division was due to a reaction against State-ownership which had become marked by 1921, and more so to the naïve idea that the competition of a State section and a powerful company would benefit both, and aid efficiency.

However this may be, the Algerian railways are at present under an intermediate *régime*, clearly a step towards the realization of complete State-control. But, as always, the need is not so much for increased efficiency as for an extension of railway facilities, for Algeria has still only 4,214 kilometres of line, although, since effective settlement is concentrated between the Maritime Atlas and the coast, the extent of

<sup>114</sup> de Caix in *L'Afrique Française*, Dec. 1901, p. 401; Bernard in *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, 1/10/99.

<sup>115</sup> Report in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., docts. parl., sess. ext., 1903, p. 277. A. Bernard, *Les Chemins de Fer algériens* (1913), p. 160 *et seq.*

<sup>116</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 14/12/22, for law in full. Explanation is in *L'Afrique Française*, March 1923, p. 139.

the railways, limited though it is, is not as grievous as a study of the area of the whole colony would seem to suppose. Railways are still a problem in Algeria, but the main districts are passably served.<sup>117</sup>

Far more important are shipping facilities, the story in this connection being one of the strangest of the many strange features of Algerian history. Incredible as it may seem, France has continually been enforcing what is neither more nor less than an isolated fragment of the old *Pacte Colonial*, the Navigation System of the English, in so far as Algerian sea-borne commerce is concerned. Until 1866 the *régime* of monopoly was unquestioned, and foreign shipping was not allowed. For a period after this, between 1866 and 1889, the monopoly, under the spur of the free-trade ideas of 1860, was abandoned, and it was decreed that "navigation between France and Algeria can be effected by all flags." Whether there was any causal relationship between the two features or not, this freedom coincided with an increased prosperity in Algeria. Imports increased by 17 per cent. and exports by 40 per cent., although it must be remembered that in these years there was a new feeling of optimism towards Algeria, and this was the apex of the system of "official colonization," with the additional imports that this involved. At the same time, it was clear that freedom of commerce facilitated if it did not actually cause the expansion.

On the other hand, and quite distinct from the protectionist reaction of 1882, two new factors emerged to cause a change in policy. The French mercantile-marine, hampered by foreign competition, found itself in a state of "permanent crisis," and, in addition, French influence was being largely undermined in every other Algerian field without this gratuitous handing-over of sea-going trade to the foreigner. Measures of national policy thus combined with the internal situation in Algeria to cause the law of April 2, 1889, restoring the old *Pacte Colonial* in so far as it related to the exclusion of foreign shipping. Five years before, Algeria had submitted to tariff-assimilation with France, and thus was largely deprived of foreign imports: now, navigation-assimilation was introduced, and really meant a ban on foreign shipping, with the consequent dependence on the whim of French shipowners. All shipping with Algeria had to be under the French flag, and with boats having all the officers and most of the men French, half owned by Frenchmen, and built in French lands,—a unique code, in so far as strictness was concerned.<sup>118</sup>

The results of this antiquated locking-up were to be expected.

<sup>117</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, April 1912, p. 139.

<sup>118</sup> Lusinoki (1922), *op. cit.*, pp. 34, 134, 153. See *Journal Officiel*, *Deps.*, 22/3/89, for voting.



Foreigners were kept out, it must be admitted, but the Algerians, individually and collectively, suffered. France, obsessed by the notion of colonial subordination to the interests of the mother-country, seemed determined to place every possible obstacle in the way of colonial development: and the Algerians had to submit to these shackles without the slightest compensation, either direct or ultimate. The policy may have been to some degree justified, had the end been to develop a local mercantile-marine within the colony, but this was impossible, because Algeria could not compete with the State-aided lines from the mainland. The law of 1889 simply meant the dependence of Algeria on mainland shipping—without any safety-valve in case of emergencies. It was not alone the high freights that mattered, although certainly these were sufficiently grievous burdens to a struggling colony. In 1916, for instance, a ton of merchandise could go to America for six francs, to Antwerp for twelve, but to Marseilles for not less than thirty-five!

But such a charge could be arranged for, were it regular. It was the perpetual uncertainty involved in the system that so paralysed Algerian efforts. For example, maritime strikes became frequent in this century,—in 1920 there were thirty-three seamen's strikes, including eleven in Marseilles, and there had been catastrophic strikes in 1900 and 1904 and 1909, each involving what Leroy-Beaulieu called "the sequestration of Algeria." When these disputes broke out, Algeria was isolated from the world. No imports came to her, and, still more grievous, her produce rotted on the wharfs. In 1904, for instance, exports fell to a third of their normal amount, because there were no shipping facilities.<sup>119</sup>

To safeguard the country from a complete economic crash under such conditions, some relief was necessary, and a law of July, 1909, allowed a temporary suspension of the 1889 *régime*, if needed.<sup>120</sup> By virtue of this power, the monopoly, owing to war-conditions, was suspended by a decree of April, 1915, and again in October, 1919, for a period of two years. But the principle of 1889 still holds, and foreign trade with Algeria is practically forbidden. The matter is still approached from the standpoint of national economy; and it is argued that dependence on a foreign mercantile-marine is strategically weak, is opposed to the concept of the French Empire as a centralized organism, and exercises a deleterious influence on the exchange-value of the franc. National interests have to be considered first, and, if need be, the colony must suffer. But, while this point of view is little challenged, it is con-

<sup>119</sup> See Report of special commissioner in *Journal Officiel*, docs. parl., 18/3/05, p. 1749.

<sup>120</sup> Lusinski (1922), *op. cit.*, pp. 182-188; *Journal Officiel*, docs. parl., Deps., 1909, p. 1217.

tended that the colony can pay without having its whole future risked by the whims of trade-union leaders and mainland shippers, and that an adequate service of public steamships could be instituted. Whatever the solution, the very economic life of Algeria is subordinated to the theory of 1889, which is one of the gravest and certainly the most easily removed of the many obstacles confronting Algerian progress. Yet, although the continued suspensions have shown how untenable the position is and how much greater a safeguard free commerce is to the colony, the position remains unchanged in theory and law, with all the uncertainty and economic loss that are involved.

### THE POST-WAR CRISIS

The accumulated effect of these weaknesses in Algeria's position bore full fruit during and after the war-years, when it became evident that the colony's position was such that it could barely keep afloat during normal years, and that its economic development was not sufficiently consolidated or elastic to allow it to encounter a crisis. The war, in effect, played a strong spotlight on the weaknesses of Algeria's evolution in the preceding decades, and, while this did not help to solve the problems, it at least made them clear and justified those reformers who had been protesting against the false state of security into which misleading or half-true census and budget and commerce reports had lulled the ordinary observers. Critics had held that Algeria's position was fundamentally weak, and that the apparent progress was not on sound foundations: and the strain after 1914 demonstrated the truth of their contentions.

The war at first provided opportunity for Algeria. As a totally agricultural country, a certain market was ensured for her products, and naturally at enhanced prices. Over 17 million metric quintals of cereal-produce were sent to France during the war, and there was all the agricultural development that this implied.<sup>121</sup> At the same time, the war entailed an insuperable financial burden for the Government. Up to 1914 the budgets since the grant of financial autonomy in 1900 had invariably shown a credit-balance, so long as the charges still met by France were not taken into account. Considering only the items to which it was limited, it had allowed an accumulation of 13,000,000 francs of reserves by 1913, and the State debt was insignificant. By 1921, however, this reserve had been absorbed and in its place was an accumulated deficit of 372 million francs,—and this before the post-war collapse.<sup>122</sup> The actual breakdown came in 1921, when to the general

<sup>121</sup> Table in *Journal Officiel*, 26/7/19.

<sup>122</sup> The debt was 860 million francs in 1919, interest charges absorbing 13 per cent. of the annual revenue. See *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1922, p. 170.

post-war restriction was added a four-years' drought. Up to 1920 there had been good harvests, but the financial drift had occurred in spite of them: now, with the entire land in the grip of a drought year after year, the country rushed headlong to ruin. The natives were starving, and 20 million francs a year had to be advanced to them in 1921-1923, and the concerted disasters had sapped their *morale*, the culminating point of disorder coming when typhus and a criminal wave swept over the country together. For four years there were no crops; the heavy cry of distress—the *bââ-bââ*—arose everywhere; and whole regions, even the prosperous Sersou, threatened to revert to the original desert. The world economic crisis of 1920 had naturally led to a restriction of credit-facilities, and the Government of Algeria could not cope with the crisis of depopulation in the rural districts.<sup>123</sup>

The State thus saw its finances crippled, seemingly beyond repair, especially because the franc was continually falling. The budget mounted and mounted, beneath the double impetus of increased charges and a depreciating currency, and, by 1921, trebling that of 1914, it passed a milliard francs for the first time. To restore *morale*, the Government claimed that, since the franc had depreciated to a third of its value in the intervening ten years, the position was really unchanged, but the *Délégations Financières* pointed out that the subsidy from France instead of trebling in proportion had actually been cut down by two-thirds, while the effective yield of taxes had in all increased between four and five-fold. The position had undoubtedly changed for the worse, and the Government had to support all manner of unlooked-for charges.<sup>124</sup> Much was expected from the provincial control of the railway-systems, but the only tangible result by 1922 was an increased deficit of 275 million francs. Moreover, 253 million francs had been spent up to 1923 in helping the drought-victims, because the natives had no reserves to meet crises.

Algeria could no longer carry on, and, in 1921, despite the increased taxes, the receipts were insufficient for the *ordinary* budget expenses, not taking into account those entailed by the drought and the railways and all of the other extraordinary sums that were termed "special accounts."<sup>125</sup> A law of July, 1921, therefore authorized a loan of 1,600 million francs, not, be it noted, for public works or schemes of development, but (the first quota of 250 millions at least) simply to balance the budget and to meet the everyday expenses of administration.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>123</sup> *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1923, p. 211 et seq.; *L'Afrique Française*, April 1923, p. 193. See article by Bluysen in *Colonies et Marine*, Feb. 1921, p. 82.

<sup>124</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, July 1923, p. 384.

<sup>125</sup> Steeg in opening *Délégations Financières*, 1923. See *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1923, p. 212.

<sup>126</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 27/7/21.

The country was slipping back, and meeting its obligations only by putting them on the shoulders of posterity. Algeria, in a word, was in a state of oblivion, and naturally her prestige and credit were gravely weakened when she had to resort to a loan for her ordinary budget-expenses, as nothing could better demonstrate the essential instability of the country's economic position, the more so because equally harassed French colonies elsewhere were emerging from the crisis in a far better manner.

The country had little credit, its resources seemed at an end, its trade was declining, and (if the effect of depreciation be taken into account) even its exports were dwindling. No other French colony fared as badly in the post-war crisis, for all of them had a stable development to fall back upon, and even the Cinderella of French colonies, Equatorial Africa, had its undeveloped resources, while, on the contrary, Algeria seemed only to have the effects of past crises and the retribution of past policies.

This crisis held until 1926. The trade-returns up to the end of 1925 showed a diminution which, while it cannot exactly be computed, amounted to a regular decline of exports, even below the low return of 1920, with practically uniform imports. The dwindling exports are the most telling commentary on the position of a country which depends entirely on agricultural exports, and it is clear that, notwithstanding the extraordinary loans and the depreciation of the currency, the economic barque of French colonization in Algeria is close to the rocks, hampered both by storm and its own inherent lack of power, and drifting helpless, in good or bad seas, without immediate hope of getting to land.

This does not mean to say that the position is irremediable. Algeria has too great natural resources for that: it simply means that French policy over a long period, and the combination of external and internal factors since 1914, have produced a present bankruptcy which can only be averted by frankly recognizing the failures of the past and, as in France itself, by strict reconstructionist measures. Willy-nilly, Algeria is in a position where she has to face her problems squarely. The alignment of forces would probably not have come about so quickly had not the war and both the mondial and local crises after the war precipitated matters; but the general trend of Algeria, even in the years before 1914, was such as to make a far-reaching reconstruction inevitable some time or other. Algeria was in the position of a gambler moderately endowed with fortune, hazarding his riches by unwise play and evading a reckoning or even a summing-up of the losses until a catastrophe brought this reckoning and the drastically changed conduct which it implied. There the matter rests at present; and it cannot be too clearly emphasized that Algeria's

crisis is not simply a corollary of the mainland trouble, but is a blend of this with the indisputable weaknesses of her own development over a long period of time.

## VII. Conclusion

How far, then, may it be said that France has succeeded in Algeria ? Clearly, the history of the land in practically every sphere has been a chequered one, and it is out of the question to speak of general success or failure. That would be impossible, even could the Algerian problem be considered as a colonial matter alone ; and, in reality, such an isolated setting cannot hold, because the Algerian problem was always complicated and rendered *sui generis* by two features which distinguished it from every other French colony,—namely, the “prolongation of France” idea and its severance, even to-day, from the rest of the colonies ; and secondly, the fact that it was never merely a colony to be developed on the most efficient lines possible so much as a training-ground or an experimental station for French colonization elsewhere.

Algeria occupied a peculiar place in the French colonial system : perhaps the most readily grasped analogy is that of a central training-school in an educational system, in connection with which it would be absurd to judge the success of the school in question simply by the scholarship of the pupils. Its success in training teachers would equally have to be considered, and then a wider and more indefinable influence which it would exert on the teaching *corpus* as a whole. And so it is with Algeria, with its peculiar place within the French Empire. The problem is at least triple, and results, to be at all true, should be evaluated from those three standpoints,—as successful in itself, as a training-ground for the colonies, and as affecting the later colonies by a propagation of what, for lack of a better term, might be called “colonial *morale*.” Even so, there is a fourth direction to be considered,—the extent to which Algeria has influenced French policy itself : the training-school, as it were, looks not only outwards to the teaching-world in general, but backwards to the board of education which determines policy. And it would be little exaggeration to say that it has been the wider and vaguer influences which Algeria has exerted on France and the other colonies that have made her so important, and least of all the actual success or failure of Algeria as a detailed and specific experiment in colonization. It is in the wider field of determining and shaping policies and attitudes that Algeria’s real importance has been, especially in the formative periods of French colonial policy, as in the eighties of last century.

But, even considering the unfairness of pillorying Algeria as simply a concrete experiment in colonization, some attempt must be made to

evaluate the general success or otherwise of the French in grappling with the immediate problems they encountered there. In the first place,—and this is the feature that always has dominated, and presumably always will dominate, any Algerian question—there are the natives. Here, the French record has clearly not been satisfactory, and this is the more reprehensible because native policy was for long determined, not by the dictates of local conditions, but almost solely by the policy pertaining in France for the time being. *Refoulement*, assimilation, *cantonnement*, limited *association*, and now the turn to assimilation again since the naturalization law of 1919,—all alike have had the same effect in alienating the natives and aligning them, aloof and at least passively hostile, in a solid phalanx against the French, with whom they have had, and have, no appreciable degree of *rapprochement*. They are an alien element with no part and no hope in the social system, and to them, such an evolution as that contemplated by the naturalization law of 1919 is but the last refinement of mockery, a mockery gloating on their ruin.

There are five million natives in the land and they are rapidly increasing in numbers, despite suffering and droughts and diseases. Though prosperous in Kabylie, the mass of the remainder disposed of their land in the coastal region ; and, taking the whole of Algeria, each native has an average of five hectares, but it must be remembered that much of this is beyond the Maritime Atlas. Their agricultural methods have been little changed since 1830, and, indeed, the *fellah* of the desert lives now very much as his predecessor did under the Bey of Algeria a hundred years ago : life to him is a little more peaceful but quite disgruntled and equally as precarious : starvation is always a possibility, and, in drought years, a probability ; and the main difference is that now he can no longer express his resentment at affairs in general by finding an outlet for his surcharged emotions in war. The natives are backward in everything, and, despite agricultural and educational opportunities, are a constantly hostile and unassimilable *bloc*. Nor is this a newly caused religious movement, or, as in Tunisia, an expression of post-war unrest : rather is it something deeply rooted and handed on from generation to generation throughout the past century. French native policy has failed, and, in view of the general psychology of the natives, such a reform as the naturalization law of 1919 is simply a gesture of weakness, rather than a token of success so far achieved.

In so far as the European populations are concerned, the French are politically and socially dominant, even if their numerical status is by no means clear. Algeria has 405,000 Frenchmen, of whom at least a third are probably of foreign origin. Half of these are agriculturists on the land, but, since the war, there has been a steady drift away from the rural

areas, and it cannot be said that, apart from the flourishing viniculture industry, a French rural population has been soundly established: they have a part in the cereal-production of the Tell, but pastoral pursuits rest outside their ken.

Side by side with them are the foreigners, who are given in the census as numbering 189,000, but who are probably twice as numerous as that. They are not yet absorbed in the wider unity of Algeria, and the two wings of the country are, to all intents and purposes, foreign colonies,—Oran is Spanish and Constantine Italian. The talk of “a neo-African race,” said to fuse the whole of the ethnic elements into a wider and more resilient type, is as yet only a prediction, for the only neo-African race is the French Midi type, modified by the freer life and the ruder conditions and the different climate of Algeria. The foreigners, in other words, remain as distinct social and economic units, and, as such, are always potentially separate political units. At present, both Spaniards and Italians are increasing very rapidly in numbers, and the operations of the automatic naturalization law of 1889 does nothing to make a man who can speak only Spanish and reared in a Spanish *milieu* a Frenchman at heart, or even in his mode of life. The foreigners in Algeria, therefore, are a potential menace, and, at least, the Spanish are a problem, the Italians a distinct danger.

As for the general development of the colony, Algeria has been in the forefront of the French colonies in securing economic enfranchisement, but this has largely been counteracted by the effects of the proximity of the motherland and the control that this has engendered in every branch of economic activity, especially in shipping and imports. Nevertheless, the economic autonomy achieved has been very real, and Algeria is practically self-governing in so far as this is concerned. Political development, however, has not kept pace with economic freedom, and, beyond the obviously inadequate *Délégations Financières* and *Conseil de Gouvernement*, the various sections of the Algerian population have practically no means of expressing their wishes, and still less, save in the budgetary field, of coming to decisions.

Economically, Algeria has suffered from inadequate policies. As a totally agricultural country, her prosperity depends on increased production and rural advance; yet agriculture, save for the vine, is very backward in its methods and practically stagnant, both as concerns European and native efforts. Algeria has missed the *métayer* or capitalistic system of Tunisia and has not secured commensurate gain from the stress laid on installing a population of small European farmers. Agriculture, therefore, remains in a coastal strip north of the Shot Plateaux, from El Oussera to the sea, and even there suffers from an unduly limited outlook.

The ebullience of 1911-1913, with its emphasis on new methods and dry-farming and scientific agriculture, has gone, and in its place a fixed gloom has appeared, no doubt aided by the long absence of credit-facilities due to the antagonism of the Bank of Algeria, which was not ended until 1926. The pastoral industry, although it should be the supplement of agriculture in a belt right up to the Piedmont desert-lands, is practically in the same state as in 1830, both as concerns size and methods, and so needs no comment. Commerce, as dependent on agricultural output, naturally suffers from this backwardness, although the suffering is in this case increased by an anomalous limitation of shipping facilities and the more or less modified isolation of Algeria which this implies. In all, geography and local conditions and French policy have conspired to limit Algeria's economic development; and the war and the subsequent crisis have changed the position from drift to something like catastrophe.

Taking all these factors into consideration, then, it becomes clear that Algeria has been a costly experiment, and, in many directions at least (in so far as the natives, land-policy, and political organization are concerned) a failure. The *peuplement*, so much spoken of and for which so much was suffered, has turned out to be limited in amount and largely foreign in nature: it has not been commensurate with the cost, and, by subordinating everything in Algeria to an artificial scheme of development, has hindered the country's normal growth.

Looking at the Algeria of since 1914, one sees how tragic a disillusion of the imagination was Prévost-Paradol's vision of a "New France,"—the dream so dear to the Ferrys and the Etiennes of last century. Algeria has not been a successful episode in French colonization, and has survived more in spite of, than because of, French policy,—assimilation in every branch, and *refoulement* of the natives, for instance.

But such a summing-up must not neglect the two final factors,—that the potential agricultural riches of the country (a certain if slow avenue of progress) remain as a guarantee of future stability, if the problems be approached in a proper spirit and if policies be determined by the practical needs of the situation; and, secondly, that Algeria had to be a general testing-ground for French colonial experiments, a kind of colonial laboratory, and so had to suffer from inapplicable or incoherent or discontinuous policies. This largely accounts for the complicated land-policies and the various economic and political arrangements at the different stages of the colony's history, and for the general impression that remains that Algeria's policy was always one of *petits paquets*, lacking cohesion or unity. When not bound by this need for experimentation, and profiting from the trial-and-error policies of Algeria, France was able to fare better in Tunisia, West Africa, Madagascar, and even in



Indo-China ; and, in evaluating the success in those colonies, it must be taken into account that much of the success was due to the suffering of Algeria and made possible only by that suffering. Algeria, a failure in many ways itself, had to be a kind of whipping-boy for the rest of the colonies, and so its record of failures was unduly long.

But, all in all, Algeria cannot be taken as a successful instance of French colonization : its history alone would not be a justification for further efforts of colonization, but how much this was due to an inexperience which held in the past but now no longer pertains, and how much to the peculiar relation of "elder brother" which Algeria has always borne to the other French colonies, is not clear. The only clear feature is the mixed character of the record and the failure of the resultant structure to stand the strains and stresses of a prolonged crisis from its own resources.

## CHAPTER VII

### TUNISIA

#### I. The Acquisition of Tunisia

**T**UNISIA was from the first a contrast to Algeria in many ways, the contrast being the more striking by reason of the geographical contiguity, and more, the geographical similarity of the two countries. Both countries formed a unity with no natural frontier between them, and, although Tunisia was the richer of the two, their conditions and potentialities were very similar. Yet this did not prevent the introduction of vitally different methods in each,—in general government, in native policy, in commerce, in settlement, in immigration, in law, and in most other spheres.

The one was a colony assimilated to France, the other a protectorate which retained an Oriental organization : the one was a country of small settlers, the other of *entrepreneurs* alone ; the one was essentially rural, the other equally urban ; the one saw everything native shattered and priority given to European codes and methods, while the other retained the old native polity as the basis of future organization ; the one thus had the natives driven back, the other left them predominant ; the one had its trade subordinated to France, the other kept its development free. They were at the two extremes of organization, and thus, under practically similar conditions, we have interesting materials for a comparative study of French colonial methods, and under such conditions that the experiences in each can readily be compared, and conclusions drawn, without the presence of those extraneous or local factors which usually prevent such a comparison.

Of course, the adoption of a policy so different from that of Algeria and so foreign to the general spirit of French colonial ideas at the time was largely the result of circumstances. It would be quite wrong to attribute it to any reforming zeal or colonial liberalism, which were non-existent features in the France of the eighties. Circumstances forbade the application of the customary French policy of annexation and assimilation, and France had to be content with what seemed to her a desultory, half-way measure,—and that was all there was to it. The policy, liberal and successful as it turned out to be, was simply forced

on an unwilling France by the logic of events and by the virtual impossibility of introducing the customary colonial *régime*. France was the victim of circumstances, and would have been prepared to explain away a failure by the limitations due to those circumstances: as it was, even the success of the policy could afford no sufficient ground for saying it was deliberately evolved in theory and accepted by the will of the colonizers concerned. Even de Lanessan and Paul Cambon, the leading exponents of the "Protectorate" idea, could not go as far as this, for, whatever the policy was with them as enterprising individuals, to the mass of Frenchmen it was simply an accident,—viewed as at least annoying and almost certainly impossible of survival: it would bridge the gap until France would be able to annex the land completely and introduce a sensible policy of assimilation! How could there be any other attitude in the eighties, which saw the heyday, the unquestioned acceptance, of a rigid assimilation as the determining *motif* of colonial organization in all branches? Tunisia was clearly an exception and accident, and the circumstances surrounding the introduction of the policy should not be interpreted in light of its later success and the sanctioning of the "protectorate" idea in many other French colonies.

The whole of the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of Tunisia support this interpretation, for the *furor* of opposition and colonial intrigue was not such as would accompany the introduction of a new liberal policy for the colonies. Tunisia caused more trouble in France than any other colony except Tonkin. France was still in the grip of the *revanche* idea, and colonies were anathema to her, as amounting to an almost treacherous dispersion of the State's resources: every franc spent in Africa was a step back from the Rhine and, according to the popular fire-brand, Déroulède, a practical insult to the dead of 1870. With these ideas in the ascendant, it is easy to understand the concerted opposition to any new African colony, but it is very difficult to reconstruct the bitterness of the situation and the passionate stirring of the French soul on the matter, first of Tunisia, then of Tonkin.

The country plunged itself into a veritable ecstasy of opposition, and an acute national neurasthenia seemed to develop, with tautened emotions predominant over hard facts, and with a nervous system so overwrought that the question could scarcely be mentioned in terms of approval, let alone rationally discussed. It was a nation against one man, Jules Ferry, but, with his dour Lorraine stalwartness, he fought best with his back to the wall, and gave Tunisia to an unwilling country, taunted the while by the epithet "*Le Tunisien*," which was almost tantamount to "*Le Traître*" in the conditions of 1881. The whole position was amazing, with nothing similar in the history of English colonization,

for even the question of the Boer Republics under Gladstone at least left the nation reasonable and practical. Had the spirit of a Welsh revival-meeting swept over all of Great Britain at that moment, and had the calmness of good manners been submerged beneath a tide of passion, the position might have remotely approached that of France. But it needs the Latin temperament even to conceive of such an orgasm of overwrought emotions concentrating on one point and dominating everything else in life for the time being. And this has to be stressed, because it was not merely an ephemeral tendency, and not merely determined or coloured French activities in Tunisia for some years, but affected the whole of French colonial policy until at least the expansionist period of the nineties.

There were two clearly opposed sets of arguments at the time, as summed up respectively by Ferry and Clemenceau, although the latter's exposition was clearer.<sup>1</sup> Ferry was somewhat vague on the matter, stressing now the interests of the 200 French colonists in Tunisia, now the border-raids on the Algerian frontier, now general political interests, and now the specific economic issues at stake, but mostly a vague desirability of expansion. His attitude was one of indefinitely etched and rather incoherent reasons, lacking the aggressive clarity of his rival's standpoint. He committed the tactical blunder of merely answering Clemenceau's arguments and thus putting himself in the position of a person accused; and clearly, defiant publicism was the need, rather than legal arguments in the Assembly. Of course, he was hampered, because, as Premier of France, he could not reveal the true economic and international motives that drew him from a general belief in colonial expansion to a specific intervention in Tunisia at that moment. He was bound by the dictates of policy and his position, and so could not effectively answer his opponents.

On the whole, however, his policy was determined by three motives,—economic, international, and Algerian, and it is difficult to place these in their relative order of importance. The motive most clearly expressed was the Algerian. As Ferry himself said, "the Tunisian question is as old as the Algerian," for the very contiguity of the two countries had, in the preceding fifty years, "led to a quite remarkable sequence of ideas and a unity of designs and conceptions on this point."<sup>2</sup> Tunisia was always a hatching-ground for disturbances in Algeria, and an ever-present source of menace, both political and military. There could be

<sup>1</sup> Ferry's explanation is in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 6, 10/11/81, or in his collected speeches, Vol. IV, p. 481, and the whole of Vol. V; Clemenceau's in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 9/11/81.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 6/11/81.

no frontier peace with an asylum so handy for raiders, and with no punishment meted out to them on the Tunisian side of the border. Thus, in the decade before 1881, no fewer than 2,635 claims were addressed to the Bey for depredations committed in Algeria by tribal raiders from his side of the line, and this did not take into account the numerous unrecorded or unproved *razzias* or the gun-running to the disaffected Algerian tribes.

It was out of Tunisia, too, that the wider Moslem unsettling came to disturb Algeria. The Senussi and the other fraternities of the desert operated through Tunisia, and the specific troubles in 1875-1881 coincided with a much wider Pan-Islamic movement, of which the Kroumirs rising in Constantine, the move of Arabi in Cairo, the massacre of the Flatters mission in the desert, the insurrections of South Oran, and perchance even the unrest in West Africa, were all part and parcel. So long as such movements could ferment, or even be encouraged in Tunisia, then so long was security in Algeria impossible,—and the serious risings of 1871 and 1875 still loomed largely in people's memories. The safety of Algeria thus demanded control or at least the benevolent neutrality of Tunisia, and the latter seemed to be impossible without the former. Ferry, throughout, emphasized this motive of chastising the tribes and getting guarantees for the future more than any other, and indeed said that the *sole* reason of going to Tunisia was "the absolute need of ensuring the safety of our Algerian colony."<sup>3</sup> But it is difficult to see how this factor alone would explain his attitude and his fight against practically the whole of France, for it was a curious method of safeguarding North African interests by arousing such a bitter opposition to them. The frontier menaces certainly afforded an adequate pretext for intervention at that moment, but probably they were pretexts rather than the actual cause, and the opposition standpoint of d'Orano seemed to approximate to the truth: "I wonder," he said to the Deputies on May 23, 1881, "why, while the massacre of the Flatters mission by the Touareg produces no expedition, and while the raid of the Moroccan tribes on South Oran leads to no hostility on our part against Morocco, this incursion of 300 Kroumirs on our eastern frontiers leads us to Tunis. Therein lies the whole question!"<sup>4</sup>

Far more important were the economic motives, which really explained why France, at a moment of acute anti-colonialism, engaged in an expedition which at once cost her 153 million francs. As the opposition saw, it was here that the real issues were at stake. In the first place, there was

<sup>3</sup> Official circular of 9/5/81, in Valet, *L'Afrique du Nord devant le Parlement au XIX<sup>me</sup> Siècle* (1914), p. 169. Compare Ferry in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 11/4/81.

<sup>4</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 24/5/81. Contrast Ferry in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 6/4/81.

the general consideration that Tunisia was a very rich country, a kind of prolongation of Algeria to the sea, but becoming increasingly rich as one went east. The country had been a granary and the wine-cellar of Rome,—a land of concentrated agricultural richness. As Pliny the Younger has said of the Tacape oasis : “ There, under a very high palm-tree, an olive grows ; under the olive a fig-tree ; under the fig-tree a pomegranate, and under it a vine ; under the vine are wheat and vegetables and herbs, all in the same year, and each growing in the shade of the others.” Exaggerated though this is, it rightly stresses the greater richness of Tunisia than of Algeria. The soil was more fertile, the population denser and more sedentary, and, what was most important in a Moslem country, the natives were gentle and their lands were not locked up in communal holdings. Everything conspired to make Tunisia the most desirable part of North Africa from an economic point of view, the more so as powerful specific interests had come at this stage to reinforce the general desirability.

After prospering in the middle years of the nineteenth century, Tunisia had fallen under the anti-French Mohammed Sadak (1859–1882), who allowed the country to drift and commenced a *régime* of intrigues for the granting of concessions to foreigners. France had enjoyed certain privileges in Tunisia since 1664 and had obtained wider liberties by “ the fundamental pact ” of 1857 which had commenced the modernization of the country. To allay the financial drift, a kind of international rule was established in 1869, with England, France, and Italy forming a tripartite Commission of Control. But Britain waived her claims at the Berlin Congress, and France came to increase her share by promoting various private ventures which seemed to have at least a governmental *imprimatur*, and perhaps a stronger connection.

By 1880, therefore, France could adduce four important economic interests in Tunisia : firstly, there was a general monopoly of telegraphs and various other communication-facilities : then, there was an important railway project to unite Bone and Guelma, with its implications on the future of Eastern Algeria and the linking of French interests in North Africa : then there was the much-quoted Enfida Domain, which was practically a large private colony of Frenchmen on the north coast of Tunisia : and lastly, there was a private Credit Foncier project which was to play a considerable part in the economic development of the land. All of these were French, all directly or indirectly affected State interests, and all of them were placed in jeopardy by the recalcitrant attitude of the Bey. They implied a French colony, a French trans-African railway, a French monopoly of communications, and a French control over the country's financial development. In the aggregate of their possibilities,

they were an important phalanx, and there was little doubt as to the aims expected of such measures of penetration.<sup>5</sup> Ferry, referring to these specific ventures, called them "the collaborators of economic conquest," and even the official circular accompanying the French Yellow-Book on Tunisian affairs, (1881) said that, "under French protection, all the natural resources of this region can be developed with the energy and intensity of modern methods and practices,"—a clear definition of the policy of economic Imperialism. So that, however much Ferry might reiterate that "it was not for such motives that we made the Tunisian expedition," the interpretation of his opponents in seeing the conquest as almost entirely a measure of economic imperialism seemed the more correct one, although they probably under-estimated the vague and idealistic impulses which actuated Ferry.

The final set of motives were those inspired by a mistrust of Italian ambitions in the Mediterranean. It is significant that the manner in which France prepared the way for Tunisia was such that the sanction of every interested Power, except Italy, the most interested of all, was obtained,—this omission being regarded as a testimony of the irreconcilable nature of the two countries' pretensions. Italians had for long had an eye on Tunisian development, and by 1880 there were 20,000 Italians there as compared with 200 Frenchmen. An Italian Company had received the concession for a railway from Tunis to Goulette and had obtained a large governmental subsidy from Rome: the Italian Consul-General supported the rival claimants to the Enfidu Domain: and there was much talk in Italy about Bizerta, the best port in the Mediterranean, on the securing of which, as a complement of Toulon, the French placed so much emphasis.<sup>6</sup> France, therefore, keenly desired to forestall Italy, and her statesmen were torn between this motive and their traditional hostility to colonial ventures.

As a result of all of these influences,—political and economic and international, with a vague imperialism giving unity to the whole,—Ferry resolved to act. Taking advantage of an application from the French colony in Tunisia for protection, he demanded a credit of 5,695,000 francs from Parliament (April, 1881), and received it by an almost unanimous vote.<sup>7</sup> This was the starting-point of the trouble, for, as it afterwards turned out, the great bulk of the Deputies had no notion that they were sanctioning a new colonial venture: they thought that they

<sup>5</sup> For details, see *Livre Jaune, Affaires de Tunisie, 1870-1881* (1881), or Ferry's speech in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 10/11/81.

<sup>6</sup> P. Chickhachev, *Espagne, Algérie, et Tunisie* (1880), p. 555; A. Rambaud, *Jules Ferry* (1903), pp. 288, 289.

<sup>7</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 8/4/81. The application for help is in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 9/11/81.







were voting for coercive measures over an independent Power and had no idea at all of attacking that Power's authority. Indeed, Ferry himself declared time and again that he had not the slightest intention of conquering Tunisia and that the expedition was solely for police or punitive purposes.<sup>8</sup> Whether he really believed this at so late a juncture or whether he was overcoming the predominant anti-colonialism of Parliament by a subterfuge is not clear, but probably he was drifting with events. In May, 1881, he solemnly declared that "we wish neither the Bey's territory nor his throne" and that all ideas of conquest or annexation were repudiated. But, after the general election of that year and after the Treaty had been ratified, his attitude, or at least his public attitude, changed, probably because of the favourable election-results and the ease with which the conquest had been achieved in Tunisia, and he adopted the view-point that the credits he had received had been "a provision and not a limitation," and that, having received the first, the implication was that he could go on.

In consequence of this change of front, there came the scene of November 9, 1881,—“one of the most singular meetings that ever took place in the French Parliament.” The rising in Southern Tunisia and the need of a second expedition had made it clear that France, whether she wanted it or not, was in the position of a conqueror, and even the moderate periodicals, like the *Journal des Débats*, became restive. The whole of the opposition parties had been thrown together by their agreement on this issue: the Right and the extreme Left, as usual, combined to attack the moderate Republicans, and were joined by the many moderates who were opposed to distant ventures and upheld the fashionable anti-colonial “policy of *recueillement*.” The Ferry Government was attacked on all sides, especially by Clemenceau and Rochefort.<sup>9</sup> The former led the opposition in Parliament, the latter in the Press. Rochefort, in a famous article in *L'Intransigeant*, called the Tunisian expedition a “coup de Bourse” and, in what was the *cause célèbre* of 1881, was tried for libel, but acquitted (December 15).

On the eleventh of the preceding month, however, the real issue had been fought and the Ferry administration hurled from power. Clemenceau had argued that annexation had been aimed at from the first, that Parliament had been deliberately hoodwinked by Ferry, and that the expedition was only a pandering to commercial interests, especially those involved in the railway-company and the Enfidia Domain. Ferry

<sup>8</sup> E.g. in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 12/4/81, 13/5/81.

<sup>9</sup> Leroy-Beaulieu, “La Tunisie et l'Opposition,” in *Revue Politique et Littéraire*, 13/8/81. See Ferry's defence in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 6/11/81. Leroy-Beaulieu's series of articles from 28/8/80 to 21/5/81 is a useful running commentary.

retorted that a trans-Tunisian railway was not in any sense a *coup de Bourse*, but a vital matter for French North Africa. But his arguments lacked clarity. He still refrained from striking for conquest and found himself in the illogical position of refuting both the theory of annexation and the theory of abstention, thus cutting the ground from beneath his feet. When the matter of the second treaty came up, therefore, there were four hours of impassioned debate and then two hours of anarchy,—an amazing period when no less than sixty “orders of the day” were rejected and when the Chamber resembled a scrambling bear-pit. Though victorious in the recent elections, Ferry, isolated as he was, had to give way, and it was only Gambetta’s firmness that restored order. Next day, Ferry resigned, but Gambetta carried on the policy of maintaining Tunisia. If Ferry conquered Tunisia despite France, it was Gambetta who retained it, for, on that November day, Ferry found himself paralysed and unable to move, and, had Gambetta not stepped into the breach, Tunisia would undoubtedly have been evacuated.<sup>10</sup>

By this stormy method, France obtained control of Tunisia, and it is important to remember that policy was for long determined more by the memory of November 11 than by anything else, and Tunisia was associated with the equally unpopular Tonkin in popular imagination. Most of the trouble, however, was in France, because the land itself was easily occupied, as the Tunisians, easy-going and slothful, are the least combative of all the North African peoples. The first treaty, that of Bardo (May, 1881), was secured after practically a skirmish, and, in nine short articles, gave France a right of occupation and of managing Tunisia’s military affairs.<sup>11</sup> But it did not mention a Protectorate, and France seized the opportunity of the Sfax insurrection to bring about the Convention of June 8, 1883, which definitely established a protectorate and a right of intervention in domestic matters.<sup>12</sup> Not till October, 1884, however, was machinery set up to make this internal control effective, and, until “civil controllers” were introduced at this latter date, the French really limited themselves to military occupation. But, by the end of 1884, the storms at home had settled; France had resolved to maintain Tunisia; and the decree giving her control of the administration stereotyped this position. By that time France was mistress of Tunisia.

<sup>10</sup> Full details are in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 6-13/11/81.

<sup>11</sup> Supplement to *Livre Jaune, Affaires de Tunisie*, April-May 1881; *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 13, 25/5/81. See Reinach in *Revue Politique et Littéraire*, 21/5/81.

<sup>12</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 2/4/84, or Ferry’s collected *speeches*, Vol. V, p. 100 *et seq.* The best account of the negotiations is in “P.H.X.” (d’Estournelles de Constant), *La Politique Française en Tunisie* (1891).

## II. The Organization of Tunisia

The question of organization ~~was~~ a pressing one, because France had to determine on what lines she was going to rule her conquest. Clearly she could not introduce her usual colonial system, that of rigid assimilation, because the land was only a protectorate and because native organizations were too strong. But would she recognize those organizations in their entirety, or would she introduce as much of the assimilation *régime* as was possible under the circumstances? The pressure of facts decided this question for her, as the only thing that she could do was to recognize the *status quo*, with a minimum of change. The basis of Tunisian affairs had to remain as before, and the land retained its Oriental organization, with advice given by European "controllers" or residents. A certain dualism thus came to characterize Tunisian affairs, power being divided between the native base and the French control. The Bey remained and kept his two civil Ministers, although war and foreign affairs naturally went to France, and the French Resident-General presided over the Council of Ministers. In local government, there was a similar cleavage: the native *cuids* and *khalifus* were kept for local administration, the *cheikhs* for tax-levying, and the *cadis* for justice, but the thirteen French "civil controllers" acted as Residents and kept the control of provincial affairs well within their hands. Even the courts were mixed in the same manner, with European guidance on a basis of native law and practice. In Algeria native justice was sent by the board; in Tunisia it was kept, and the *Code Napoléon* was powerful only because its procedure unconsciously lingered in the minds of the French law-officers. The Government completely abandoned the idea of unifying Tunisian legislation and justice, and consciously kept this duality throughout its organization.<sup>13</sup>

This compromise worked very well for a time and suited both parties. It was to France's interests, because there was no native resentment such as hindered the progress of Algeria, and, even more important, expenses, being limited to the army and to a railway-loan, were reduced to a minimum; and to secure these results, France was prepared to close her eyes to the inertia and corruption of the Oriental methods of government. On the other hand, the natives, for their part, were pleased with the compromise, because their old mode of life was disturbed as little as possible and they retained their former codes of law and their customary institutions. Everything seemed to be going on as before in the land, save that the incomprehensible foreigners were more in evidence. Cambon's idea of a "protectorate" and a preservation of

<sup>13</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 18/7/82; Valet (1924), *op. cit.*, p. 94.

native institutions seemed to be working well, and, what the country lacked in efficiency and progress, they gave it in stability and peace. The absolute quiescence of Tunisian affairs until 1914 must be attributed to this policy of compromise and abstention,—of progressing through native organizations and on native lines, and with only a minimum of foreign intervention.

As time went on, however, the attitude towards the compromise began to change. The opposition between the Oriental ideas of the civil-government of Tunisia and the Occidental view-point of France became more and more marked, and it was clear that there had to be a kind of joint development. To speak of parallel evolution, with practically no contact between the two trends, was seen to be only a cover for either unequal growth or divergent growth. Native organizations either stood still or else progressed on lines incompatible with French ideas. A more directly controlled evolution was needed, and, even if uniformity of organization between France and Tunisia was not sought, there at least had to be compatibility. In political organizations, for instance, a change on European lines, at least to some degree, was necessary, for, up till 1881, there was no council or deliberative assembly in any form in Tunisia, and the Advisory Conference instituted in 1896 was an assembly of notables rather than a legislative body. Similarly with justice: the mixed courts worked very well in land matters, because there the primal need was to consider the local code, but, in other fields, their operation was cumbrously inefficient, and at times little short of ludicrous.<sup>14</sup> The law of contract and the criminal code, for example, were completely different in French and native law, and it seemed to Frenchmen to be an anomaly to sanction polygamy and severely punish drunkenness.

Reforms of 1922, therefore, brought about significant changes in each of these branches, and thus confirmed the newer opinion that the duality of Tunisian organization was only a sign of transition,—a hampering restriction imposed on the French by the pressure of circumstances. The changes, by using councils and the principle of the separation of powers, brought both administration and justice into line with Western ideas. Native courts were left for purely native matters, but for others there were to be French courts, and even the Mixed Court which decided land-matters had become more French than native in practice. Tunisia had gone far towards the Algerian position, and Cambon's "benevolent control" had given way to the newer idea of rapid reform. Ferry had said that "the representative régime, the

<sup>14</sup> V. Biamut, *Essai sur la dualité législative et judiciaire en Tunisie* (1922), pp. 12, 236 et seq. Compare Alapetite in *Journal Officiel*, Dets., 27, 30/1/12.

separation of powers, the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and written constitutions are senseless formulæ there,"<sup>18</sup> yet practically all of these had been introduced. The dualism which had been the very essence of Cambon's organization was rapidly giving way, and the suppleness and elasticity which had characterized Tunisia before 1914 were being replaced by the extraneous methods followed in Algeria.

But this change belonged entirely to the post-war period, and, before then, Tunisia represented the "protectorate" idea, with the primary emphasis on a toleration of native customs and as little interference as possible with the ordinary life of the native. All of the Residents had consistently followed Cambon's policy, and indeed, it was largely because Tunisia only had six Residents up to 1916 that such an unusual degree of continuity was made possible. The position in all of these years was native self-government and French direction, with a real tolerance and adaptability predominating in the French attitude. Perhaps this was in no small measure due to the fact that Tunisia was outside the scope of the Paris colonial *bureaux* and was always under the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who was generally too much occupied elsewhere to trouble over the *minutiae* of Tunisian administration and who was content to leave the Resident-General a free hand as long as there was no trouble,—a position very different from the constant intervention of the *bureaux* in Algerian affairs and the Minister of Colonies elsewhere. The accident of its status thus helped Tunisian development and explained both the continuity of policy and the freedom from petty interference.

So it came about that a quiet, almost untroubled, prosperity characterized Tunisian affairs, aided, too, by the internal nature of the country. The Tunisians were not high-spirited natives but docile town-dwellers, and, being relatively prosperous and with a prosperity based on trade, were peaceably inclined. "Native policy" was therefore practically non-existent before the war, and perhaps this absence of a positive policy was the best testimony to the quietness of the situation. France simply had to refrain from interference and provide a peaceful environment,—that was all; and, if she let native affairs go on as before, there was no problem. Hence there came to be toleration rather than a concrete native-policy. The Tunisian was never sacrificed to a theory as was the Algerian, but continued in his former mode of life, save that the more stable conditions of existence enabled him to prosper to a greater degree. As France was not obsessed by any theory of a French peasant-proprietary, there was no dispossession as there had been in Algeria, but, on the other hand, a quiet native proletariat. It would be difficult to imagine a more complete contrast than between the native

<sup>18</sup> Ferry's *Collected Speeches*, Vol. V, p. 529.

policy of Algeria since 1850 and that of Tunisia since 1881,—the one theoretical and based on native exploitation, and the other practical and conducive to native progress.<sup>16</sup>

Everything seemed ready-made for the French administrators. There was no difficulty in defining the tribes or the status of the natives : they were simply beylical subjects, and even the question of military service was thus solved. None of these questions—legal status, tribal rights, conscription, land-matters—occasioned the turmoil that they had in Algeria. In all of them, a mere continuation of the previous system sufficed. There was no breaking-up of the tribes or of tribal organizations, and consequently none of the artificial policies that Algeria had known. Everything simply continued, and so the French “controllers” did not rule directly in any part of Tunisia : in fact as in theory, they did not administer but merely overlooked the machine and advised the *caïds* and native chiefs. Even the old taxation system was retained, although Cambon was rigorously attacked for sanctioning this instead of introducing what seemed to France to be more modern and efficient and equitable methods. But he held here as elsewhere (and this was the key-note of the “protectorate” policy), that it was not a vice to be Oriental in an Oriental country, and, relying on his experience in the Far East, he strenuously fought against the introduction of European or assimilative ideas. And in this he was right, even though the Tunisians had to pay almost twice as much in taxes as the Algerians : the taxes were traditional and sanctioned by the approval of generations, and those were the features that appealed most to the natives.

By means of this moderate policy of abstention the French encountered no native trouble in Tunisia until 1912. After Cambon (1882–1886) and Massicault (1886–1892) had organized the policy, the various Residents carried it on on the basis of retaining as many native laws and customs as possible, and especially by winning over the religious fraternities and the traditionalists. But the position, as with government and law, was changing, and by the new century there were several native opinions where previously there had been only one. Cambon’s school, for instance, by adhering to those who looked backward to reform on native lines, made little appeal to the younger sections of the natives, the *Jeunes Tunisiens*, who demanded radical changes on European models and who created a considerable stir in 1912—the first real sign of a native problem in Tunisia.<sup>17</sup> From this time onwards, a grave

<sup>16</sup> See estimate in J. L. de Lanessan, *La Tunisie* (2nd edition, 1917), p. 304, or V. Piquet, *La Colonisation française dans l’Afrique du Nord* (1912), pp. 127, 424.

<sup>17</sup> See important debates in *Journal Officiel*, *Déps.*, 25/11/11, 2/12/11, and 20/1/12–3/2/12.

native ebullience completely changed the position ; but, up till then, it was always against the favourable background of a prosperous and acquiescent native proletariat that Tunisian development took place, and this was the most important entry on the credit-side of the French ledger.

### III. Economic Development

#### AGRICULTURE

A rich country, a predominantly native and contented population,—these were the raw materials with which France had to work in Tunisia, and it is little wonder that the achievement was great. On the other hand, too much of the credit must not be given to the purely negative conceptions of the French, for they had certain clearly defined *positive* policies which did much to account for the ultimate result. It seemed as if they set out definitely to reverse their experiences in Algeria, for they took a stand against official colonization, against settlement in villages, against the immigration of a French peasantry, and against the expropriation of lands for purposes of settlement,—in short, they stood for capitalistic colonization alone and for the retention of the natives in their existing capacities. The emphasis in Algeria had been on the introduction of “human capital” in the form of hardy men of the Midi and their families, but, in Tunisia, the capital encouraged was the franc, with the *entrepreneur*-system that this implied. French capitalists were wanted, not French farmers, and this preconceived idea of the feudal nature of Tunisian colonization was at the root of French policy in many directions, especially in the economic field. The only scope was for the man of capital, and the various policies were designed with this end in view.<sup>18</sup>

The country itself is one of dry plains, two-thirds of which are useless, but with the remaining portion ideal for wheat and olives, and it is along these two lines that Tunisian development has proceeded. At first, all of the emphasis was on the development of vines by means of capitalistic investment, especially in the hands of companies. Enfida, the domain which had caused the trouble before 1881, and which was really private colonization by Marseillais on a large scale, was the model. This huge estate of 96,000 hectares was the largest in all Northern Africa, and its history is really an epitome of the rural development of Tunisia. In the early years the Company suffered from the shortage of labour, for, after the revolt, there was scarcely one native to 70 hectares of land,

<sup>18</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 2/3/88 (Ferry) ; Leroy-Beaulieu, *De la Colonisation chez les Peuples Modernes* (1905 edition), Vol. II, p. 4, or in *Journal des Débats*, 20/2/1901.



and they were hard pressed to carry on. But, adopting a policy of conciliation, they worked out the *métayer*-system which afterwards spread through the whole of Tunisia. The first-comers amongst the French had distrusted the natives, but the Enfida exploiters used them as tenants and suppressed the rights of serfdom which they could have claimed under the old Beylical law. They thus attracted the natives from the surrounding districts, and showed how they could be utilized as independent tenants, even in the restless Sahel region.<sup>19</sup>

Lesser Companies were formed on the model of Enfida, like the "Society of French Farms in Tunisia" (1898) or the Sidi-Tahelt settlement on the Bizerta road, and it seemed as if Tunisian settlement was to be definitely on capitalistic methods.<sup>20</sup> By 1897, 467,000 hectares were alienated to Frenchmen in this manner, but in all there were only 275 proprietors; whereas in Algeria, from 1871 to 1886, 435,000 hectares were ceded, but to 39,000 persons! In reality the position was even worse than these statistics showed, because the great bulk of the Tunisian area was held by a mere handful of capitalists. In 1908, for instance, more than half of the 811,000 hectares allotted was in the hands of sixty-eight French or foreign owners, and, according to the official figures of 1914, a hundred persons held at least two-thirds of the 787,000 hectares which were then alienated to French settlers. Capitalistic settlement had thus meant aggregation of huge estates by a few people, and had not involved a commensurate development of the country's resources.<sup>21</sup>

This was clearly evident by the mid-nineties, when a whole series of factors combined to prove the weakness of the system. In a country in which the shortage of land was the gravest obstacle to progress, and where even then the administration was being forced to tackle the difficult question of religious lands, practically the whole of the land had been alienated to a few score of absentees who neither progressed themselves nor provided facilities for others. Then, too, the system, even when successful, had involved certain anti-social tendencies. The early hopes of a vine-industry rivalling that of Algeria had been dashed to the ground, and the exploiters had perforce to turn to cereal-cultivation. But this meant the need of more labour, and the utilization, not of natives on a modified serf-basis, but of European tenants. And, because French farmers would not migrate to this land where favours were accorded only to capitalists and where there were neither official-villages nor free-grants nor all the other facilities of the Algerian *régime*, the European

<sup>19</sup> G. Loth, *L'Enfida et Sidi Tahelt* (1910), pp. 105-130.

<sup>20</sup> Its annual reports are collected in *25 Ans de Colonisation nord-africaine* (1926).

<sup>21</sup> For this aggregation, see Tumedei, *La Question tunisina e l'Italia* (1922), p. 188; *L'Afrique Française*, April 1921, p. 111.

*entrepreneurs* in Tunisia had to turn to Italians. So that capitalistic development meant a locking-up of most of the land and a utilization of a little by Sicilian tenants.

Tunisia, therefore, gradually entered the second stage of her economic evolution,—one of a more varied agriculture on smaller lines, that is, *moyenne* as against *grande* colonization.<sup>22</sup> With the turn to cereals came a corresponding turn to smaller estates and direct European farmers. No longer was there to be only a vague work of direction by European capitalists; on the contrary, average well-to-do farmers were themselves to work the land. As if to symbolize the change, colonization left the east for the north, and the centre of rural development shifted from the Cape Ben and Enfida regions to the Medjerdah. The result was a steady increase in the rural population, despite the needless alienation of the past. This was to some extent reflected in the official statistics. In 1887, 275 French proprietors held 284,000 hectares; in 1912, 2,719 held 774,000 hectares; and, while this did not mean a corresponding increase in actual settlement, the number of proprietors had at least increased eightfold, whereas the area had only trebled. *Moyenne* or average colonization was emerging, and grazing-farmers were replacing absentee capitalist-owners as the normal type of rural settlers in Tunisia.

This position was distinctly a healthier one than the preceding stage, and seems most in consonance with the conditions in the land. *Grande* or capitalistic colonization had clearly broken down, and the spasmodic attempts to introduce official settlers on the Algerian model had not succeeded.<sup>23</sup> As Leroy-Beaulieu argued throughout, Tunisia, whether in the hands of absentee-capitalists or resident-farmers, was a country of exploitation rather than immigration, and it was generally believed that this was so. When the reporter on the Tunisian budget in 1899 stated that "the aim of the Protectorate is to implant a population of Frenchmen in Tunisia," the Deputies were scandalized, because such a concept would have meant a reversal of practically the whole French policy in the country. It is true that, after 1897, as a result of a reaction against the immigration of Italians in large numbers, there was a move to attract small French settlers, and that, by ten years later, a Government fund of 7½ million francs was available for this purpose; but the Government was never enthusiastic over the scheme and, to 1914 at least, was concerned almost entirely with the economic develop-

<sup>22</sup> de Lanessan, *La Tunisie* (1917 edition), p. 169 *et seq.*

<sup>23</sup> Pichon Report on Tunisia, especially on French colonization, in *Journal Officiel*, docts. parl., 1912, No. 85. Summary in *L'Afrique Française*, 1912, p. 226.

ment, the *mise en valeur*, of the country, and not with *peuplement* by French farmers.<sup>24</sup>

The experiments of the nineties certainly seemed to warrant this attitude, because by 1909, in the three centres created, only four of the original farmers remained, and the villages had reverted to the original bush. So too with the experiments after 1914, when a definite programme of introducing small farmers was tried. Some 242 French families were installed in Northern Tunisia within six years, but the results were mediocre, as the aim was not so much settlement as strategy. These villages were "species of civil and agricultural French garrisons," dumped down in the Tell to counteract the spread of Italian peasants there and to act as nuclei for the dissemination of a distinctly French influence. In a word, it was "essentially the creation of strategic posts," and not an agricultural experiment. Both of these attempts, therefore, by their failure, gave further support to the policy of aiding moderately wealthy farmers, and it is in this direction, especially in opening up the *habous* or religious lands hitherto closed, that the Government has been working of recent years. The settlement of moderate working-capitalists is the direction in which Tunisian agricultural experience has crystallized, and this form seems most suited to the position and needs of the country,—certainly more so than the peasant-settlement of Algeria or the earlier Tunisian experiments of absentee plantation-owners.<sup>25</sup>

At present, the position is as follows:—

	EUROPEAN HOLDINGS			
	French.	Italians. (Hectares.)	Maltese.	Others.
Tell . . . . .	305,000	43,600	9,500	9,600
Sahel and steppe . .	249,000	17,100	5,400	1,800
	<u>554,000</u>	<u>60,700</u>	<u>14,900</u>	<u>11,400</u>
	EUROPEAN OWNERS			
	French.	Italians. (Hectares.)	Maltese.	Others.
Tell . . . . .	1,436	1,236	39	33
Sahel and steppe . .	272	329	63	17
	<u>1,708</u>	<u>1,565</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>50</u>

Two features are thus evident after forty years of Tunisian settlement. The first is how feeble has been the result in so far as settlement by Frenchmen is concerned, for, even taking every proprietor as a resident (a condition by no means pertaining in Tunisia), there are only 1,708

<sup>24</sup> Compare interpellation in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 9/2/1901.

<sup>25</sup> Rood Balek in *L'Afrique Française*, April, 1921, p. 112 *et seq.*, p. 321.

French settlers, as compared with Algeria's 200,000: and the second point is the corollary of this, that effective settlement has largely fallen into foreign hands. There are more Italian and Maltese settlers on the land, and, if absentees be deducted, the difference is further in favour of the Italians. But this failure is less significant than if the policy sought had actually been one of encouraging personal settlement: as it is, the evil is not so much in the lack of French settlers (that was only to be expected as a result of the policies enforced) as in the settlement of Italians in the face of obstacles put in their way.

Even more important is the result that the early policy of large alienations is exerting on present problems, because the land so tied up represents most of the Tell,—that narrow strip of never more than a hundred miles in extent which contains the best land of Tunisia. Hence the only source of land available for future settlement is in the extreme south, the Sahel and the steppe country, isolated and of an inferior quality. The domain lands in the Tell are exhausted, and it is a common sight in this pre-eminently restricted land to see areas which have not been occupied for over twenty years, held by speculators for a gain. Indeed, the State domain has always been limited in extent, amounting only to 100,000 hectares at the time of conquest. As these resources dwindled, the State had to seek for other fields to exploit, and, the initial alienations being what they were, the development of Tunisia came very largely to depend on the acquisition of lands suitable, and available for, purposes of settlement. The history of Tunisia since 1890, at least on the economic side, has largely been one of a search for lands.

The first gain was in the extreme south, where the extensive domain of the Siala family was declared State property in 1892. Here, to prevent a recurrence of the absenteeism which had so ruined the north, planting was made compulsory, and in consequence the *métayer* system, with the natives as tenants, flourished. The result was the transformation of the south: the Sfax and Zazis became the olive-lands *par excellence*; and by 1912, 6,000 natives and 150 Europeans were settled there on 144,000 hectares of land. A new province had been won for the State, and practically a new industry created. A spirit of energy unusual to Tunisian affairs had manifested itself, and the result was both clear gain and promise for the future.<sup>26</sup> But, after all, the incident was only an exception due to favourable circumstances and was in no sense a solution of the general land-problem. The State was still looking round and taking stock of its resources, and, with some diffidence, resolved to tackle the question of the *habous*, those religious lands which covered a third of the surface of Tunisia and which were clustered in the fertile northern regions.

<sup>26</sup> Alsapetite in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 31/1/12.

There were two kinds of *habous*, as in every Mohammedan country,—private and public. Both, however, were of similar origin. When a Moslem wished to tie up his lands to prevent his heirs squandering their resources (on the model of English entail) or to prevent confiscation by the Bey, he made it *habous*,—that is, he transferred it to some pious foundation: but the point was that he reserved the actual enjoyment of the land to his posterity, until his line was extinguished. It was handing over land to the “dead-hand” of the Church, with the transfer dating from the moment, but not becoming effective in practice until the extinction of the donor’s family. The land is called a private *habous* while still enjoyed by the family, and then becomes public.<sup>27</sup>

Under these circumstances, the Government was confronted with two vitally different problems. The one was to deal with land actually held by the Church, and the other to cope with land held by individuals but tied up for ultimate clerical ownership. Naturally, the public *habous*, those which had already reverted to the Church, were the least difficult to tackle, because with them religious resentment was not intensified and made immediate by personal interests. But France for long hesitated, as the *habous* question is always one of the most difficult that confronts a European Government in a Mohammedan country; and yet something had to be done, because this was not so much an obscure point of Koranic law as a pressing public issue. First, therefore, the public *habous* were attacked and were made available to settlement by the device of letting them on what really amounted to a perpetual lease (1898). This was the only way of surmounting the difficulty imposed by their inalienable nature. But, ingenious as the device was, it did not suffice, because these public *habous* represented only the tag-end of the *habous* process, and the extinction of families was not a common occurrence in a polygamous society. By 1921, therefore, only “a dust of tiny parcels” remained of the public *habous*, and the State was as hard pressed as ever to find lands for settlement.

There was thus no other alternative than to try to secure the far greater area locked up in private *habous*. Various attempts had been made in the preceding thirty years to make these available, but every one failed because of the concerted opposition of the natives. This was an interference with religion, it was held, although it is a curious point that the absorption of the public *habous*, which involved no interference with the economic privileges of individual Tunisians, had not aroused much comment on this score, although the objection would have had

<sup>27</sup> J. Terras, *Essai sur les Biens Habous en Algérie et en Tunisie*, p. 12; Alapetite in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 30/1/12; article in *Compte Rendu du Congrès de l'Afrique du Nord* (1909), Vol. II, p. 385.



eyes it means to them the existence or otherwise of their separate society. If they give in on this matter, their lands, their religious sanctions, and even their racial distinctness,—the very fact of their existence as an entity, will go, so they conceive. Then, with this gone, they see themselves drifting, without religion or society, hopeless and suffering, in an alien civilization. The Tunisian can be an artist in excoriating the wound of his own misery. The land question has thus been swept into the whirlpool of racial passions and religious hate, and the Tunisian race stands back to the wall, fighting for that indefinable spark which means the survival or the decline of their particular civilization: and thus the issue is not one of economics, not one of dealing tactfully with Koranic law, but the fate of the soul of a people. It has passed from concrete issue to an intangible world of emotion and principles, and for this change of orientation French tactlessness must be blamed as much as native susceptibilities in the post-war era. But, whatever the cause, the very existence of such a psychological attitude makes the problem, a difficult one under any circumstances, almost insoluble.<sup>29</sup>

The dominant fact of Tunisian economy therefore remains the land-shortage. The domain-lands and the public *habous* have gone, and the private *habous* are sacrosanct and protected by a wall of unreasoning prejudice. The only way out, apart from repurchase of land held by Companies and the taxation of large estates, would seem to be by aiding the conversion of communal land into individual, but, as has been seen, collective land is not as important in Tunisia as elsewhere in North Africa. Nevertheless, it amounts to a good deal in the aggregate. To facilitate this conversion, Cambon at an early date (1885) introduced a modified form of the Torrens system,—the system of land registration and transfer which had so simplified Australian land-transactions. By this, a document is given to show the title to the land and anybody can see at a glance all the claims against it,—a particularly important desideratum in a country where landownership is complicated by religious factors and vague traditional influences. With the aid of the lay and religious leaders of the Moslem community, Cambon investigated the whole situation and gave a precise code of land-guarantees. He cleared up the situation and, by the aid of the Torrens system, relieved the Tunisian land-system of the accumulated heritage of past legal encumbrances and made land-transfer as safe and as easy as selling a donkey.<sup>30</sup>

But this was only the first step towards the goal aimed at, and provided the means by which land *could* be easily transferred and registered, if the

<sup>29</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, June 1921, p. 187 et seq.

<sup>30</sup> Article by Martineau in *Compte Rendu du Congrès de l'Afrique du Nord* (1909), Vol. XXI, p. 217 et seq.

owners desired it. To go from that, however, to the breaking-up of collective estates was a long step, and, unless such spoliation as had occurred in Algeria was to be allowed, meant a slow development. The Government was torn between the conflicting ideals of safeguarding their land to the natives and yet of providing land for settlement. In 1901, for instance, it decreed that collective lands were to be inalienable; but this, while safeguarding native interests, did nothing to solve the land-shortage. Therefore, a committee of investigation (1910-12) sought a way by which the natives, while sending their lands along the path that Cambon had so carefully marked out, could obtain an adequate compensation. But the conflict of interests remains, for one side has to suffer: and, although the Government favours gradual individualization, it realizes that the change has to come naturally, and that such an inflation of public opinion as has been evident since 1912 renders any forced change most impolitic.

Therefore, it simply has to stand aside and trust that the natives will avail themselves of the facilities provided by Cambon,—but their wait is long and their reward little. At first the simplicity of the Torrens system and its freedom from complications attracted the natives, and 750,000 hectares were immatriculated or registered by 1902. Then this feeling gave way to quite a different one, when it was realized that the very ease of transfer under the new system was a decided drawback, because the old complications at least had the effect of retaining the land in native hands and deterring speculators. Up to 1914, therefore, only 5,405 native proprietors in all came under the Torrens system: the rest preferred to keep the old methods with all their uncertainty and cumbrousness; and, by 1920, only 1,702,873 hectares were registered, and most of this by Europeans. Simplicity is not the only desideratum of a native system, especially when the said simplicity is conducive to unwise alienation of native rights. The Torrens system has become tabooed by the natives as a device which is aimed not so much at giving them security and a simple tenure, as at placing a premium on hasty transfer, and thus playing into the hands of the Unbelievers. Since 1909, therefore, there has been practically no utilization of its provisions by the natives,—another reminder of the unimportance of logic in dealing with natives.<sup>81</sup>

As a result of this failure, Tunisia has practically no State-land and no reserves, either actual or potential, for purposes of settlement. Unless something can be done to break up the large unused estates, the country

<sup>81</sup> Bessis, *Essai sur la loi foncière tunisienne* (1912), especially pp. 62, 100 *et seq.*, for reforms needed. For paucity of results, see Bismut (1922), *op. cit.*, p. 229, or *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1919, p. 203.



is thus at the end of its tether, because there is no land for new Europeans. Those who are already there are holding their lands idle as a speculation, and the natives keep theirs for their age-old agricultural methods.

A consequence of this dilemma is that agriculture is in a deplorable state, and in a country where, as de Lanessan pointed out, there are most of the conditions under which it should prosper. The native agriculturists are rarely owners, and the *Khames*, really a serf, cares little about bettering the soil or improving his methods. Despite this, native agriculture under the French has increased from two to five million hectares, and, given sufficient credit-facilities, should increase still further.

The stimulation of this improvement has always been a prominent feature of the Government's programme, especially under Resident-General Alapetite (1906-1918), who, seeing that the country's development could not be in the hands of absentee capitalists, turned to the natives and the average European colonists to provide a more solid basis for growth. He arranged for agricultural credit-banks and societies, and, by a decree of 1909, made membership compulsory, the natives paying a certain tax in return for the credit-facilities thus provided. But droughts remained the scourge of the land (the whole native credit-scheme, for instance, was almost wrecked by the drought of 1907-1908), and there was therefore a turn to long-term loans in order to allow aid over a period of years, and to agricultural education, which would increase production under the poor conditions pertaining in Tunisia. This again was due to Alapetite, who made education "essentially social, and practical, and useful for the natives in their everyday existence." Government aid, credit-facilities, and improved methods of education,—those were his panacea; and he stressed them the more because he saw that the impossibility of making more land available for purposes of European colonization made the country practically dependent on a greater productivity by those persons already on the land.<sup>32</sup> The limitation of future development, in other words, made the prosperity of the existing settlers the *sine qua non* of Tunisian stability, because hereafter there was no longer the alternative of an unlimited settlement by immigrants, such as had been available up to Alapetite's time. The position had to be looked at as it existed then, and the Government's action determined, not by any dream of that system of rural economy that it would have liked, but by the hard facts of the existing distribution

<sup>32</sup> For his work, see his speeches in *Journal Officiel*, Dets., 27, 30/1/12,—a general review of Tunisian history. The long debate on the Tunisian loan in *Journal Officiel*, Dets., 25/11/11-4/12/12, is one of the fundamental sources of Tunisian history.

of Tunisian land. The land had gone and, as it appeared, could not be reshuffled: all that could be done was to make its utilization by the existing holders more and more efficient. The land-problem had changed its form since 1906, and it was no longer a measure of practical politics to speak of the ideal class of rural settlers: dreams of that kind had to be kept in the background and the best made of an unpalatable situation. Hence the stress on native agriculture and the provision of credit-facilities for small settlers. The Government was adopting an unwelcome *pis aller* which circumstances had forced on it and had perforce abandoned rapid transformations for a steady and limited advance on what was already there.

### COMMERCE

Despite the above difficulties, Tunisia remains essentially an agricultural country, and its commerce, as in Algeria, is determined by that fact. Its commerce has always been limited by its agricultural and phosphate production, and even the much-vaunted desert trade is significant as compared with these. In all, the economic history of Tunisia has been a steady and quiet progress, with few interruptions and little that was spectacular about it. The first positive gain from French rule was order and security, and the results at once became manifest. Within four years after 1884, when the consular jurisdictions and the burden of the international Financial Commission went,<sup>33</sup> a solid budgetary *régime* was instituted, commerce doubled, tax-receipts trebled, twelve million francs were spent on agriculture by Frenchmen, and, in all, France had spent 153 million francs on the country.<sup>34</sup> And this steady consolidation continued, as the table of commerce shows:—

REPRESENTATIVE YEARS.	EXPORTS. (Millions of Francs.)	IMPORTS.
1879-1880 . . .	22·240	
1884-1885 . . .	45·514	
1890-1891 . . .	81·934	—French Customs law of 1890
1895 . . . . .	44·000	41·000
1896-1900 (average)	41·485	54·215—genesis of phosphate exports
1901-1905 ( do. )	60·400	77·200—drought.
1907 . . . . .	103·361	102·860
1912 . . . . .	153·656	156·293
1913 . . . . .	178·663	144·254—last normal year.

What this progress lacks in specularity, it makes up for in stability, and Tunisia's advance, like that of Madagascar and Indo-China, has been

<sup>33</sup> De Clercq, *Recueil des Traités*, Vol. XX, p. 596 *et seq.*; *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 1-8/4/84.

<sup>34</sup> Ferry in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 2/3/88.

consolidated at every step. There has not been the ebb and flow of Algeria, and Tunisia knew neither the inflation that Algeria had in the eighties nor its pessimistic stagnation of the nineties. Trade, like most other things in Tunisia, has been a gradual creeping onwards, without haste and without fuss, but none the less steadily and efficiently. A certain quiet progressiveness is the key-note.

Up to 1900 the bulk of the exports were farm-produce, especially the cereals of the temperate zone. The early enthusiasm for vineyards was soon undermined, as Tunisia could never hope to vie with Algeria in this regard, and so, since 1908, the area in vines has kept fairly constant round 14,000 to 18,000 hectares. But, as the vine subsided into secondary importance, the olive, Tunisia's specialty, emerged, until it became the most important industry, especially in the centre. Already, by 1901, it claimed almost twenty-five times as much land as its rival, and the proportion has been increasing since that time. In all, Tunisia depends, so far as agriculture is concerned, on the olive and cereals, and the limit in neither direction is in sight. The cereal-area has gradually spread from 530,000 hectares in 1880 to 777,000 in the very good year of 1898-1899 and to 1,177,000 by 1916, but it is estimated that this could easily be doubled, if public works and credit were provided and the necessary land made available. The difficulties in the way of advance in Tunisia are not natural but artificial.

Outside of this agriculture, Tunisia has no staple except mining. The pastoral industry is not as important as in Algeria, and has declined continuously since the conquest. To prevent too great a dependence on the seasons, therefore, there was an eager turn to the development of the subsoil riches, and any unwonted impetus that Tunisian commerce and economic development have received must be attributed directly to this source. Indeed, the history of the land may very well be written in terms of the phosphate industry, for that accounted for the increased rate of development after 1900. Up till then, there had merely been a gradual and limited development of crops, but by that year the new industry had been stabilized, and, in addition to affording, as it were, a safety-valve to the Tunisian economic machine, had become an integral part of the works and had directly stimulated progress in other fields. The industry brought to Tunisia far more than payment for the amount of phosphate shipped every year from Sfax: the renewed activity and the greater optimism and the wider horizons contemplated all transformed the general situation, and Tunisia went ahead with a bound.

Till 1885, the only phosphates known in the world were those of Northern France and the Carolina-Florida region, but in that year extensive deposits were located round Gafsa and, next year, at Tibessa. French

capital, with its customary mistrust of colonial speculations, stood aloof, the more so because this was the very crux of the period of anti-colonialism in Paris, and so the exploitation of Tibessa was left to Scotsmen. But its immediate success led the French to intervene, and the "phosphate railway" was built from Gafsa to Sfax in Southern Tunisia,—the precursor of two others. The industry, from this time on, had a phenomenal advance, and exports jumped from 70,000 tons in 1899 to over one million in 1907 and over two million by 1913, despite an acute crisis in 1908-1909. In all, nearly 16 million tons were exported by 1915, 70 per cent. of which was from Gafsa alone: in other words, 348 million francs had been added to Tunisia's exports, and the markets for the produce were widening every year.<sup>35</sup>

But, despite cereals and olives and phosphates, the land was not developing as rapidly as could reasonably be expected, because, to some extent, it was shackled by an unwise fiscal system. France did not have a clean slate in Tunisia and had to recognize the pre-existing trade-treaties and commercial arrangements,—anathema to the country which, after 1892, had made a rigid protectionism the very nerve-centre of its colonial system and which was forced to see this country, at the gateways of the motherland, a glaring exception.<sup>36</sup>

The position was really absurd. France to all intents and purposes owned Tunisia; but the country was in commercial vassalage to foreign Powers, especially England and Italy, to whom "most-favoured-nation" treatment had been conceded in the palmy days of concession-hunting before the conquest. France was not one of the Powers so favoured, and so it followed that foreigners had, and insisted on, rights superior to those of France in a French region of control! France had to stand aside and see all her goods paying a flat rate of eight per cent. on entering Tunisia, while the products of six foreign Powers entered at lower rates! This anomalous position continued until 1897, when Italy and England relinquished their rights, although wresting financial concessions for English cotton goods and Italian fisheries respectively.

Not unnaturally, seeing the protectionist state of feeling in France, Frenchmen did not feel amicably disposed towards Tunisian goods and crushed them under the "general tariff." That means to say, Tunisian goods on entering France had to pay the highest rates, and more than the goods of any country which had a commercial treaty with France. Tunisian wines, for instance, paid 2½ times as much as Italian wines, and this was no small factor in crushing the land's nascent viniculture.

<sup>35</sup> H. Lorin, *L'Afrique du Nord* (1908), p. 298; de Lanessan (1917), *op. cit.*, pp. 26-30.

<sup>36</sup> J. L. de Lanessan, *Principes de Colonisation* (1897), p. 187.

France, exasperated by her helpless position in Tunisia's commerce, gave vent to that exasperation by treating the helpless Tunisia not only as a foreign but as an enemy country. Somewhat illogically, she retaliated to the ban on her goods in Tunisia by a corresponding ban on Tunisian goods in France, thus depriving herself of certain commodities she needed and hampering the development of her dependency. But there were two ameliorations. The Government was so preoccupied in scourging Tunisian sea-borne commerce that it omitted to run a land-barrier between Algeria and Tunisia, the result being that Tunisian goods entered Algeria free of duty and could thus go to France at a low rate. Secondly, "a happy rush of Chauvinism did in a moment what a thousand good reasons had not been able to effect in half a dozen years," when England, despite prior French rights, set up a protectorate in Zanzibar. To harm English trade elsewhere, both houses of the French Parliament, in one session and almost unanimously, voted for the free admission of the leading Tunisian products. The lesser resentment against Tunisia had to give way before the greater resentment against England.<sup>37</sup>

Economic considerations counted not at all ; but, none the less, Tunisia obtained a breathing-space, and its colonists were enabled to escape the ruin that threatened most of them. The public hostility of France had been ruining the land, but this compromise allowed it to carry on until the general clearing of the atmosphere by the treaties of 1898. In the following year, both the export and import trade of the land were regulated in light of the changed conditions. Naturally, the Tunisian market was opened to French products, for the cry of "markets" was still on the lips of every Chamber of Commerce in France, and a decree of 1904 went further in openly discriminating against foreign cereals.<sup>38</sup> The move was clearly to assimilate Tunisia to the ultra-protectionist *régime* of the French colonies and to capture her markets ; but with as little success as elsewhere, because the proportion of French imports into Tunisia only increased from 55 per cent. in 1897 to 60 per cent. ten years later, and could not pass this level. To force the desired development, therefore, Tunisia was opened free to all French products in 1919, although this involved an immediate deficit of 2½ million francs in the local budget. Tunisia, either voluntarily or by force, had to take French trade, and the land was bludgeoned into conformity with the usual French system.<sup>39</sup>

In return, Tunisia received a right of free entry into France for her cereals and, up to a certain quantity, for her wines and oils and pastoral

<sup>37</sup> Vignon, *La France dans L'Afrique du Nord* (1888), p. 161 ; Leroy-Beaulieu (1905), *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 13, 14.

<sup>38</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Depa., 21/5/04 (interpellation on Tunisian trade), followed by decree of 19/7/04.

<sup>39</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, 1919, p. 185.

products. But this proviso was elastic, and the Tunisians rigorously demanded that, if they had to accept French products, they should at least receive the *quid pro quo* of a complete opening of French markets to their produce and the disappearance of the tariff-boundary on the Algerian frontier. Even then, they held, the position would be inadequate, because the primary need of an agricultural country is for cheap manufactured goods from abroad ; and besides, France was not involving herself in any disadvantage in taking the cereals that she so greatly needed.

The balance of advantages, even with a complete reciprocity, would be unequal, it is argued ; but, in the one-sided state of affairs which has pertained since 1898, the inequality is the more marked and it is meaningless to speak of a balance. It is the old case, so familiar in the history of French colonization, of a territory being assimilated willy-nilly, and having its economic development deliberately sacrificed to the altar of the mother-country's interests. Every part of the colonial structure is subservient to France and French interests,—so runs the French colonial creed, and this applies as much to Tunisia as to any completely French colony. Thus, even since 1898, the tariff-*régime* has always been a thorn in the side of Tunisia's progress,—an obstacle to be overcome, and not only a handicap in itself, but one exercising a wider irritant effect on Tunisian-French relations.

#### IV. The Foreign Populations

It has been seen that both the land and the tariff policies were direct incentives in turning the eyes of Tunisia towards Italy, and this, in view of the experience of Algeria and the geographical proximity of the Italian peninsula, should have been a tendency very closely watched by France. As it was, France seemed to be favouring a *dénouement* of this kind and erecting a wall of hostility between her interests and those of Tunisia. For all of these reasons, Italians came to Tunisia in ever-increasing numbers after the seventies, and especially after the construction of the Bone-Guelma railway. They afforded the labour-supply for the public-works and mines, and practically monopolized the worlds of labour and small commerce. Their number increased again after the programme of public works in 1898 ; and the ease with which they became acclimatized and the lower subsistence-level in Tunisia accounted for a steady trickle of immigration from Italy.

By about 1900, however, something like a stabilization of their numbers was attained, and hereafter natural increase rather than immigration was the main reason of their progress. The failure of viniculture discouraged the rural element and directed it towards Algeria. Indeed,

"it can be said that the failure of the vines has saved Tunisia from the Italian invasion,"<sup>40</sup> and, although this is somewhat exaggerated, it rightly emphasizes what has been a negative safeguard of Tunisia. Moreover, the Kabyles of Algeria and the natives of Tripolitania began to push the Italians from public works and to restrict them to the lower ranks of commerce. The labouring and farming classes of Italians were thus dealt severe blows, and Italian immigration came to be confined to certain classes. Nevertheless, as the table shows, they have become the predominant element in the land, even more so than have the Spaniards in Algeria :—

	French.	Italians.	Maltese.
1881 . . . .	700	11,200	7,000
1886 . . . .	3,500	16,750	9,000
1891 . . . .	10,000	11,000	11,700
1896 . . . .	16,000	55,000	10,200
1901 . . . .	24,000	71,000	12,000
1906 . . . .	34,600	81,156	10,000
1911 . . . .	46,000	88,082	11,300
1921 . . . .	54,447	84,819	—
1926 . . . .	71,020	89,215	8,395

It must be emphasized, however, that these official French statistics do not show the situation in its true light, as both French and Italian critics have demonstrated the falsity of the various Census-returns. Carletti, an Italian expert, showed that the figures of the nineties were clearly too low in so far as the Italians were concerned, because the increase of births over deaths alone would have shown a quicker rate of progress than the census revealed ; and he claimed that by 1900 there were at least 80,000 Italians in Tunisia. Even the French, Fidel for instance, showed that the Census of 1906 was useless, because it neglected illiterates who did not trouble to fill in their papers ; and that of 1911 was still worse, because, although the Italians were admittedly more than twice as numerous, they increased only by 6,926 according to the Census, whereas the French had gone up by 11,434, and immigration could not account for the difference. As far as the Italians alone were concerned, natural increase, as in preceding periods, would have meant a far larger increase, quite irrespective of new immigration. Figures of the Italian *Pubblica Sicurezza* therefore claimed 102,885 Italians in Tunisia by 1908 and 105,684 in 1909, and the *Bolletino dell' Emigrazione* held

<sup>40</sup> J. Saurin, *L'Œuvre française en Tunisie*, p. 12. Articles in *Quinzaine Coloniale*, Dec. 1901-Jan. 1902.

conservatively that at least 100,000 Italians were resident there. Some French experts, Chappdelaine in 1911 for instance, reached a similar conclusion, and the French colonial organ, *L'Afrique Française*, after a close investigation, asserted that there were 130,000 Italians as against 30,000 Frenchmen in Tunisia (1911).<sup>41</sup>

Despite this, the Census of 1921 gave 84,819 Italians to 54,447 Frenchmen,—a clearly impossible estimate, as Tumedei, the Italian statistician, demonstrated. Chappdelaine also adhered to his previous estimate, and it is asserted that the compiler in charge of the Census-report stated in an interview that the real numbers were 130,000 and 40,000; and this would certainly square with the position in the past. The official position was the less tenable, because the French element had been weakened far more than the Italian by the war, and because, while the drift of the Frenchmen from the land was noticeable, a new onrush of Italians set in in 1919–1920, spurred by the pressure of poverty in Italy and by the greater depreciation of the franc than the lira. The official French attitude, however, does not change, and the Census-report of 1926 states that, owing to the falling-off of public works since 1918 and an active French policy of naturalization, the Italian element is declining, and already numbers only 89,215 to the French 71,020.

Yet the actual numbers matter little: the point is that it is beyond dispute that the Italians in Tunisia are in a large majority, and have always been in a large majority. There is thus much support for the Italian contention that "Tunisia is an Italian colony governed by the French," and that "Italian manhood and French silver" is a just epitome of Tunisian history since 1880. The Italians have become numerically predominant, and Tunisia is far more of a foreign colony than even Algeria. France cannot even have the satisfaction of terming the Italians Frenchmen as she has done in Algeria, and thus effectively hiding the real state of affairs by an indiscriminate extension of the rights of citizenship, because the automatic naturalization law which solves the difficulty in France and Algeria has no counterpart in Tunisia, and there are few individual naturalizations,—indeed, only 1,607 in the twenty-eight years before 1919! The Italians come as Italians and remain Italians, and it is precisely this lack of absorption, even of juridical and nominal absorption, that so markedly differentiates Tunisia from Algeria. In Algeria the problem is to a certain degree self-annulling, but in Tunisia it becomes more clearly defined with the passage of the years, and the two racial blocs stand, not confused as in Algeria, but in serried ranks of hostile groups.

<sup>41</sup> C. Tumedei, *La Questione Tunisina e l'Italia* (1922), p. 152 et seq. *L'Afrique Française*, 1919, p. 186; 1921, p. 41.



The question of status, therefore, is a very difficult one, and, affecting as it does the very existence of French control in the land, has provided the gravest problem in Tunisian history. The starting-point was the Conventions of 1896, which France accepted in order to induce Italy to relinquish her rights of trade-priority over Tunisia.<sup>42</sup> Italy had heretofore enjoyed a right of "most-favoured-nation" treatment, even over France, and would not give this up without adequate advantages. For her part, France wanted a free hand commercially, and, to obtain this, was prepared to make concessions to Italy's desire of safeguarding her nationals in Tunisia.

The Conventions of 1896 thus became a kind of charter of Italian liberties in Tunisia. By them, the Italians were allowed to sit on juries: they were immune from capital punishment, which did not exist in Italy: they could become lawyers or enter the other professions: the existing Italian schools were to be maintained: and the children of the immigrants were to remain Italians, and so on indefinitely, so that all of the unborn generations of Italian residents in Tunisia thus received every privilege of living in Italy, and for their children and their children's children as well as for themselves; and in addition they received the greater opportunities of a new country. Thus, "it is possible for an Italian in Tunisia to live his whole civil life from birth to death in an exclusively Italian environment. He marries at the Italian consulate, declares his children there, places them in Italian schools, is cared for at the Italian hospital by Italian doctors, reads Italian papers, and is a member of Italian societies; and his descendants for ever remain Italians."<sup>43</sup>

The position is really absurd in a European colony, and is unknown anywhere in the world, save where rights of extra-territoriality apply in certain Oriental countries. An immunity is conferred on the Italians from all attempts to assimilate them to the society in which they live; and thus France, to gain a purely temporary trade-advantage, for ever closed the door on the achievement of social unity in her possession. Tunisia, at the behest of the French manufacturers, was condemned to perpetual intestine division, and, so long as the Conventions of 1896 remained, unity in the land was but a dream,—as incapable of realization as Louis Bertrand's vision of a neo-African race reviving the old Romanization by a fusion of all the Mediterranean stocks in the north.

Nor have the Italians been slow to realize the implications of the immunities conferred on them. They have insisted on the last tithe of their privileges, the result being a large degree of Italian proselytism in

<sup>42</sup> In Tumedei (1922), *op. cit.*, p. 15 and Appendix IV, or *L'Afrique Française*, March, 1921, p. 82.

<sup>43</sup> Rood Balek, *L'Afrique Française*, 1921, p. 73.

Tunisia, openly in defiance of French efforts of assimilation. And the point is that this development is *not* natural: it is deliberately forced and inevitably becomes distinct from, and then opposed to, French efforts; and under the circumstances, it is but a small step from a privileged *enclave* to a predominant section. The Italians perceived that the French had practically bartered away their heritage in Tunisia, and thus increased their separatism and their power year by year,—and all quite legally. This has been more noticeable since 1910, because, up to that time, the steady economic advance of all sections had the effect of turning endeavours from racial spheres to economic. Everybody shared in the economic revival after the development of the phosphate-industry, and, in the general prosperity, a distinct *rapprochement* between the two racial sections could be discerned. But after 1910 the *intransigents* recovered control of the Italian settlers; and the weakening of the French element during the war, coinciding as it did with a new spirit of unrest on the part of the natives, acted once more as a direct incentive to the assertion of Italian claims.

The French were giving way numerically; for, from 1915 to 1919, there were 4,942 French deaths to 3,116 births, quite distinct from the weakening of the French element by conscription, which the Italians did not have so severely. Consequently, the Italians forged ahead, and in every way became a more powerful and more unified *bloc*. Rather unfortunately, too, the French began at this stage to abandon their emphasis on "the policy of association," and to talk, as in Numa-Leal's *Le Péril Italien* (1913), of "an Italian menace," "Italian *irridentism*," and the like. Instead of attempting to bridge the growing chasm, they widened it, and reinforced their steadily growing weakness by a more and more assertive opposition. As the facts turned against them, they became increasingly vociferous, the new bombastic attitude assuming its height in Flandin's policy of "Gallicanization" after 1918. Alapetite, with his customary tact, had stressed association and agreement in difference, but his successor stood for assimilation to a strictly French model.<sup>44</sup>

The Italian position came to be based on economic rivalry and French exclusion, and was given an emotional intensity hitherto unknown by reason of the changes in Italy and the pronounced irridentist feeling which emerged in Tunisia in consequence. By 1920 the Italians had secured control of the vine-industry and were intrenching themselves on the land; and in industry they provided the majority of European workers and arrayed themselves against their French employers. A cleavage on racial lines was thus complicated by a corresponding economic difference, just at the moment when racial egotisms were unduly excited on

<sup>44</sup> Tumedei (1922), *op. cit.*, p. 63 *et seq.*

both sides. The leading organ of Italian opinion, *L'Unione*, in August, 1918, urged a virtual revolt as a protest against the increased cost of living and the decision of the conditions of life by French employers ; and this attitude persisted. To this was added the newly pugilistic force of Italian nationalism. The Rome Parliament had lively debates on the Tunisian question in 1920-1921, crystallizing in proposals for the direct representation of the Tunisian Italians in the Italian Parliament.

On the other side, the French had precipitated the issue and flung down the gage by Flandin's decrees of 1920 and 1921. He selected the matters of education and land-ownership as test-cases, because there the Italians were gaining the most conspicuously and standing in dramatic opposition to French claims. In these two matters he adopted the attitude that the Italians had either to conform voluntarily or else to be made to conform, by fair means or foul. Even *L'Afrique Française*, the French colonial organ, doubted the wisdom of this direct defiance, and, quoting the maxim "*Quieta non movere*," held that Flandin's zeal made him overlook practical considerations. As it was, he literally repeated the old cries of the assimilators of the eighties, and declared that "all our efforts must tend to fuse the Italian element in our schools." By two decrees of February, 1919, therefore, he strove to eradicate Italian influence on the land and in the schools,—in his own words, "to suffocate at one and the same time Italian rural settlement and educational propaganda." Existing language-schools were really to be throttled and all new ones prohibited ; and thus the young Italians would have to go to French schools during their impressionable years.<sup>45</sup> The second decree instituted "an exceptional tax" on all transactions by which a native or Frenchman sold land to a foreigner,—a tax of from 50 per cent. to 80 per cent. of its increased value since 1914.

This was the answer to the new wave of Italian immigration which had set in in 1918 and which was attempting to re-vitalize Tunisian land-settlement. The effect would have been to have prevented the newcomers from obtaining land at all, because the Tunisian domain was so tangled that it was only by purchase that they could obtain land to settle. The measure was frankly an anti-Italian one : as the *Conférence Consultative* said, "it is national rather than financial in its character," and was introduced to meet a specific demographic peril and not to cope with the post-war budgetary crisis. Side by side with these two attacks, Flandin attempted a rearguard action by his attempts to absorb the Italians into the French electorate by an automatic-naturalization law, on the Algerian model,—and here he was supported by the moderate reformers, who could see no reason why the Algerian compromise could

<sup>45</sup> Tumedei (1922), p. 42 *et seq.*, for Italy's position.

not apply in Tunisia, or why it should be any more humiliating for the 130,000 Italians of Tunisia than it was for the 100,000 Italians of Algeria.

The two sides were thus clearly arrayed the one against the other. The French stood for a gradual assimilation of the two elements, with automatic naturalization for third-generation Italians and a withdrawal of the official nature of Italian schools as preliminary steps.<sup>46</sup> Of course, the unwise discriminations of Flandin had to be abandoned, and consequently the Bonin-Pichon Accord of September, 1919, equalized French and Italians in so far as land-sales were concerned, and promised equality of treatment to the private schools of both countries.<sup>47</sup>

Beyond that Italy refused to go, and claimed that the Conventions of 1896 were still to stand, because they meant that the French, in return for Italy's promise not to interfere in Tunisian matters, had agreed to safeguard the interests of the Italians there. As for relinquishing their Italian citizenship, the official Italian attitude placed that entirely outside the scope of discussion. It was held that it was better to have the Italians suffer material losses than to change their status in this direction. The Italian Government, therefore, limited itself to protesting against "this odious and systematic attempt to denationalize the Italians, and the consequent prevention of any form of commercial and industrial activity."<sup>48</sup> It fought for the *status quo*, with extra privileges for the Italian schools.

There the position still rests, dominated by a warlike atmosphere which acts as a direct deterrent of economic advance. The specific points at issue in 1919-1920 have been settled, but the ultimate question has in no sense been attacked, save in the direction of making the differences more acute and less reconcilable. Before this skirmish the difference between the two elements was stressed, but after it this difference had become a clear antagonism. Tunisia is a prey to race friction. The old attitude of a mutual development no longer holds, because the Italians want to extend their numerical preponderance into other fields of activity, and the French desire the more to retain their political and financial priority. The obvious way out is for a division of functions on the lines suggested by the Italian slogan, "French silver and Italian manhood," but the French are not disposed to admit their dependence on extraneous elements; and naturally such an attitude at once strengthens Italy's aloofness.

The position is further complicated by the proximity of Italian Libya

<sup>46</sup> The French position is in *L'Afrique Française*, March, 1921, p. 87, and *Revue Mondiale*, Feb. 1921.

<sup>47</sup> In Tumedei (1922), *op. cit.*, Appendix IX.

<sup>48</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, 1919, p. 187.

and by the imperialistic schemes of Italy itself. The faults are by no means all on one side. If the French have tried to harry the Italians into conformity, as with the land-tax and school-legislation, the Italians have at times gone from internal separatism to a passive treason, as, for instance, in the campaign for the representation of the Italian *émigrés* in Rome, and in the agitations of *L'Unione*, their most powerful newspaper. Such an attitude precludes any settlement of the issues at stake, because it stresses the differences rather than the points in common.

In reality, French and Italians are complements rather than adversaries. Both supply elements necessary for the development of a new colony—elements which, in the main, the other could not supply: and, given a mutual toleration, such a division of powers would allow adequate scope for both. Moreover, if the lesson of Algeria means anything, such a mutual material development would involve a gradual *rapprochement*, because 44 per cent. of the Italians are already local-born, and differences can be noted between the Italians of North Africa and the mainland. If they were not forced into aggressive irridentism by the French, they would rather tend to fall into line with the Italians of Algeria and Morocco, and become simply "North Africans." Indeed, unless France is to lose Tunisia, such a development is inevitable. Italy provides the labour-supply, the small farmers, and the minor traders, and it is too late to deny or change this position: and, for her part, France provides the governmental, financial, and directing elements in general. There is thus a clearly defined dyarchy; and the way of advance, economic and otherwise, is by frankly recognizing the dependence of each element on the other, and by working in co-operation, rather than by stressing the differences and isolating each element in an armed camp, suspicious and recalcitrant.

### V. The Crisis after 1914

Up to 1914, Tunisia seemed the quietest and most stable of the French colonial ventures. There had never been a native question as there had been in Algeria: the Italians had for years been so prosperous as to forget separatist tendencies: the phosphate-industry was developing by leaps and bounds: the budget-position was sound: trade and agriculture were reflecting the general prosperity: and, beyond the perennial shortage of land, the horizon was clouded by no troublesome question. Even the land-question, as least in so far as it concerned the *habous* or religious lands, was deemed to be settled here in a way that provided a model for the other French colonies. Natives, French and Italians were alike progressing, and Tunisia was rapidly marching towards a fusion of interests between the various racial elements. The common bonds

were the prosperity of each since 1900 and the resultant spirit of toleration, or at least, of *laissez-faire*. The land seemed to have fewer problems and a more consistent record than any other sphere of French interest, and, despite the *habous* question and a nascent intransigence with the Italians, there seemed no doubt about the future.

It is the contrast between this practically untroubled position and the continual turmoil since 1912 that provides the touch of mystery in Tunisian history. To this date there was peace ; after it the land became a veritable pandemonium, especially as regards natives and Italians and economic development ; and the quiet consolidation, which had come to be a synonym for Tunisia, was all swept by the board. Referring to the previous state of affairs, de Lanessan, an ex-Governor-General of Indo-China and one of the leading colonial experts of France, had said :

" Of all our colonial establishments, Tunisia is without doubt the one which has developed most rapidly, the one that has demanded the least sacrifices from the metropolis, and the one in which there has been the most harmony between France and natives. It is also that in which the most useful works have been accomplished with the least *personnel*." <sup>49</sup>

Every word of this judgment was in accord with the facts before 1912, but, transferred to events after that date, becomes an almost cynical mockery. Tunisia has literally been transformed, and, although no doubt the difficulties which have flared into sudden flame were emerging beneath the surface even in the period before 1912, most of them are new. Tunisian affairs have been re-orientated, and have come to be judged by an entirely different set of values. Hence comes the friction.

As has been seen, the war produced a weakening of the French element in Tunisia, both with regard to man-power and capital, and both relatively and actually. The response to this was immediate. The Italians renewed their immigration, spread to new economic fields, attempted to win control of land-settlement, monopolized labour, and asserted themselves in opposition to French capital. They gave cohesion to the whole of their efforts by an all-embracing nationalism, and constituted themselves a solid *bloc* desiring numerical and economic predominance.<sup>50</sup> At the same time, the natives flung aside their old passive acquiescence or co-operation, and raised a native question as acute as that of Algeria. The native question has not only dawned in Tunisia : it has become a positive menace to the French, and rapidly changed the balance of power in Tunisian affairs.

The first outburst was in 1912, the year in which Tunisia was caught

<sup>49</sup> de Lanessan, *La Tunisie* (1917 edition), p. iv.

<sup>50</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, May 1921, p. 147 ; Tumedei, p. 161.

up in the general unrest that characterized the Mohammedan world at that time.<sup>51</sup> Tunisia had always been especially sensible to the general vibrations which affect Islam, because it is so close to the Senussi strongholds and is thus so directly in contact with the religious fraternities and the fanatical influences in Islam. At first, however, such political and religious grievances were adopted only by the "Young Tunisians," the turbulent youth of the country who were looked at askance by the "*Vieux Turbans*," the traditionalists who looked backwards and emphasized the co-operation between French and Tunisians. They were flung together, however, by the land question. The threatened attack on the property of the religious foundations temporarily united the two sections, both those who looked forward to changes on European models and those who viewed the Koran as the only possible determinant of secular matters. It was this combination of men whose methods and objectives were so different that made native discontent well-nigh universal in the post-war crisis, and that made the movement so serious. It was not a mere outbreak of youthful exuberance as had been the "*Jeune Tunisien*" agitation of 1912, but a national revival, firmly based on economic and religious grievances and spreading to practically every section of the natives. "Our land and the Koran" might well have been the rallying-cry, and it was this, rather than the demand for European institutions by the *Jeunes Tunisiens*, that was the key-note of the movement. In fact, Tunisia was at the cross-roads. A position had arisen that could not be solved by the methods of Cambon and Alapetite, for, as with the Italians, it was the diametric differences that were being emphasized, and the "method of association" on which Cambon relied was meaningless under these conditions. One side had to give way: the rival claims had nothing in common, no bridge by which the gulf might be spanned, and the tragedy was that, given the respective premises in each case, both arguments were logical and reasonable.

The new alignment was being prepared all through the war-years. The natives suffered little, because of the agricultural nature of the country and the increased demand for their goods; but they had to pay increased taxes and they saw how the Italians were pressing to the front and the French giving way. There was no French immigration, births were fewer than deaths, conscription was taking a constant toll, and, to make matters worse, the dignified stand which the French had taken in the earlier years gave way to "a sort of frenzy of social suicide," which, especially after 1918, led the French proprietors to join the panic and sell their lands wholesale to foreigners and natives. In three years a tenth of the French patrimony was lost in this manner, Italians replac-

<sup>51</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, March, 1912, p. 108.

ing Frenchmen in the north-east, natives elsewhere, especially in the south.<sup>52</sup>

The moment seemed auspicious for an assertion of native claims, and, from 1918 onwards, the *Destour* movement, as their agitation was called, leaped into prominence in Tunisian life. There had been a rising in South Tunisia in 1915: now again, at the end of 1918, there was a "crisis of authority," when, to the psychological despair of the French was added a spirit of turbulence among the deserters and demobilized tribesmen who could not drop the idea of using their Lebel's and who, despite stricter laws in certain directions, construed the concessions as weakness. The south became unsafe, the north uncertain, although the Lebel here gave way to the pen. Every year the list was swollen by a new grievance, so that the agitation could not die of inanition or tiresome repetition. In 1919 it was the repercussion of Italy's policy in Libya. Italy had given full nationality to her Libyan subjects in that year, allowing them both a right to vote under her own law and a right to maintain all of their old customs,—thus conferring, as it were, a double autonomy. Naturally, this acted as a direct irritant to the Tunisians, who, despite their more advanced state than their Libyan neighbours, had no political rights.<sup>53</sup> In 1920 it was the turmoil due to the publication of the famous anti-French work, *La Tunisie Martyre*, the work of Sheikh Taalbi, which rallied the reformers and crystallized native demands. In 1921 it was the quarrel over the private *habous*, which gave an immediately practical point to Taalbi's arguments. This threw all sections together for the time being, conservatives and reformers alike, and confronted France with the troublesome sight of a Tunisia *redivivus*, a new-born nationality. In 1922 it was the raised head-tax; and the effect of the new grievances each year was to re-vitalize the agitation at certain intervals and to prevent any diminution in its intensity. So that, whereas, in 1914, no reformer would have dared to have spoken against the Government in an open place and still less in a newspaper, in 1920-1921 there were frank seditions in the papers, manifestations in the streets, delegations to Paris, quasi-plots and movements for an economic boycott. The whole atmosphere had changed, and even the *Vieux Turbans*, immobile and conservative as they usually were, spoke of a Holy War. Indeed, the whole movement was permeated by a religious tinge. The *Destour*, with the "economic separatism" that was its method, appeared to the rural natives as the modern form of the Holy War,—and thus a straight path to the Paradise outlined in the Koran.

In face of this situation, the French departed from the traditional

<sup>52</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, 1921, pp. 283-285; 1922, p. 94.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, March-June 1919, pp. 189, 226.



policy of Cambon, whose last follower, Roy, had died in 1919, "without leaving disciples." His policy had been a paternal one, touching native institutions as little as possible and winning over the traditionalists, the *Vieux Turbans*, and the religious fraternities, and not troubling over those who wanted reform on European lines. But after his death the land was swept by what were called Wilsonian ideas, which, as applied to the native sphere, virtually meant a reversal of Roy's policy and a turn-back to assimilation on French models,—that is, a revival of the theory of 1789 and 1848 and 1870. The result was to emphasize the purely political aspect to the neglect of the religious and to turn to the *Jeunes Tunisiens* as against the *Vieux Turbans*. A series of paper-reforms was therefore passed and greatly modified native life, although there seemed to be no clear realization as to where they were tending. Given the religious nature of everything Tunisian, "they were tactics opposed to those which should have been chosen, and which vexed the Old Turbans without winning over the *Chebbia* (Youth) to us,—which saddened the Bedouins of the desert without conciliating the townsmen."<sup>54</sup>

The upshot of this departure from Cambon's policy was that the autonomy-demands of the reformers gave way to the *Destour* or independence-movement of the extremists. Supported by the lesson of events in Angora and Cairo, the *Destour* had become separatist and communist. A programme of "Eighteen Points" was drawn up, including responsible government and universal suffrage, the separation of powers, complete equality of opportunity for Tunisians in all posts, respect of *habous*, and a virtual independence: and the Bey, "in a moment of bad humour and discouragement," as the French said, signed this claim.<sup>55</sup>

By this time the movement was no longer one engineered by a foreign-trained *intelligentsia*-class which could not fit into the structure of native civilization: it was headed by the Tunisian nobles and rested on the support of the *bourgeois* classes and the small agriculturists. It was an expression of national opinion rather than a transitory ebullition. The French, therefore, had to abandon the policy of repression that they had attempted in 1920, and Resident-General Saint promised the separation of powers and direct representation to the natives. An official note of June, 1922, went further and promised a network of assemblies, both national and provincial, which would give the natives a chance to

<sup>54</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Mar. 1922, pp. 137, 138.

<sup>55</sup> Tumedei (1922), *op. cit.*, p. 197. All of Chap. XII is a good account of native unrest since the war. For French account, see *L'Afrique Française*, July 1922, p. 331, and discussion in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 6/7/22.

express themselves and some right of control, especially in the economic sphere.

Decrees of July 13, 1922,<sup>55</sup> therefore, inaugurated an experiment unique in French colonization,—a series of economic councils which would hereafter be the leading feature in Tunisian organization and, as a comparison with the narrower development of Algeria and Indo-China will show, a vitally important experiment in general colonial policy. The “words of discord and revolt” to which Saint had referred in November, 1922, had borne fruit in a far-reaching innovation as regards colonial machinery; and, whether wrested from France by force or not, this marks perhaps the most significant trend in recent French colonial theory. That this is so is evident when it is considered that, extended to their logical implications, these reforms will fill that gap between natives and government which has always been so evident in French colonization, and will link together the various elements on their only common ground,—economic interests.

At the bottom of the pyramid of 1922 were the *caïdat* councils, which were local groups in each administrative subdivision. These consisted of natives alone, two from each *cheikh*, and their functions were to discuss economic matters of all kinds and to nominate representatives to the wider provincial councils. They were, so to speak, economic *liaison*-groups between the Government and the scattered local groups of natives. Through them, every rural group would be made articulate, so that the Government would know in the aggregate what the people were thinking and what was their actual economic position, and would thus be able to base policy on the facts of the situation instead of on preconceived theories. Moreover, in an uneducated and scattered rural community like Tunisia, such a system of local councils afforded the only means of securing representatives of the villages in the provincial councils. The most backward community of Sfax or the Soussi had obtained both representation and articulation, and the veriest tribesman of the desert had become linked on to the general structure, now that there was a clear connection between the city of Tunis and the smallest *cheikh*.

The next element in the system, and indeed its central feature, was the Regional Council. Tunisia was divided into five regions (Bizerta, Tunis, Ref, Sousse, Sfax), each of which had a council with clearly defined economic attributes. Representation was to be on the panel-idea so favoured by the French,—that is, interests rather than individuals or districts were to form the basis. To each regional council, representatives were to be elected from the *caïdat* councils above, from the municipal

<sup>55</sup> Full text is in *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1922, pp. 247-261.

councils, and from the Chambers of Agriculture and Commerce ; and, in addition, a nominated official element was provided for. As with the *caïdat* councils, these wider bodies were to be solely economic. They were to have the same functions as the smaller councils in standing as the interpreters of local opinion to the Government, and, in addition, were to have budgets of their own. They could levy taxes and, if need be, raise loans. In fact, Tunisia was divided into a confederacy of five distinct budgetary regions in each of which taxation was to be proportioned to local needs and local capabilities. As a safeguard, however, provision was made for a French majority, and the regional bodies were not, like the *caïdat* councils, for natives only.

At the top of the new structure was the Grand Council, which replaced the old *Conférence Consultative*, the only legislative body in Tunisia up to this time. As in the other French colonies, it had been simply a body representing the various sections of the population and advising the Government on financial matters. It was an embryonic legislature which, especially since 1919, had been subjected to severe criticisms. In the College called "Commercial," for instance, commercial representatives were in a minority ; and even the functionaries, the official element, joined the opposition and adopted a sabotage-policy. In all, a majority of two of the French Colleges and a strong minority of the natives demanded reform, and in particular a more adequate representation of the economic interests.<sup>57</sup>

The Grand Council, therefore, goes further in this direction, and carries the idea of an economic council as far as it may well go. It has two sections, French and native, as in the body it replaced, and all representation is on the college-idea. It is a body representing and purporting to balance the various interests,—governmental, French, and native. Save for the representation of the French colony, there is no direct election, and French representatives are in an absolute majority. But it is not the composition so much as the functions of the body that are important, because, while the one simply follows the usual French colonial model, the other is definitely new. In the first place, the body is economic and in no sense political. One clause of the decree creating it distinctly says : "The discussion of all political or constitutional matters is forbidden."<sup>58</sup> The essential duty of the Grand Council is to examine the Budget, the point in this connection being that, if both native and French sections advise alike, the Government cannot pass over the advice so proffered. Here is the importance of the reforms of 1922,—that they

<sup>57</sup> For faults, see *L'Afrique Française*, Jan. 1922, p. 29, or *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1923, p. 186.

<sup>58</sup> Section 12 of second decree of 13/7/22.

confer a large degree of economic self-government on Tunisia, and it must be remembered that, in the peculiar conditions of French colonial policy, economic advance has always preceded political advance. On the other hand, seeing that they were dealing with a fanatical Mohammedan country rent by sedition, and with the discord aided by an outright majority of European foreigners, the French could afford to take no chances. Hence, the competency of the Grand Council was limited in two directions. Firstly, there was a dyarchy, with certain matters, such as the debt, the Civil List, justice, and "all expenses affecting the security of the State," reserved from the Council's discussion: and then again, "reasons concerning public order or the moral or material interests of France" were deemed to be sufficient pretexts for the Government to override the reforms.<sup>59</sup>

The Tunisian reforms of 1922 thus resolved themselves into a series of economic councils with the natives preponderant in the local assemblies, but with their power diminishing as the councils became more important and dealt with wider problems. The constitution was an elastic one, capable either of retaining the existing position intact or allowing an indefinite expansion. Everything depended on the interpretation given the new charter, which at least gave a positive economic expression and a possible economic power to the settlers and natives of Tunisia. The decrees of 1922 crystallize French policy in native countries, and, as a comparison with the somewhat similar Montagu-Chelmsford reforms in India will show, express the economic paths which the French have chosen in preference to the English political ones.

The first councils, both regional and national, met in November-December, 1922, and the Grand Council, in its opening session,<sup>60</sup> showed clearly that it was to be no *fainéant* body, but a distinct influence on State finance. It rejected most of the taxes proposed by the administration and substituted a customs-tax for them, declaring that indirect taxation should be the basis of the fiscal system. There the matter stands at present. Tunisia is at the dawn of a period of economic self-government, and it is expected that this will do much to divert the natives from the *Destour* and the Italians from their separatist campaigns, and thus weld the community into something like the unity of the pre-war years, with each section contributing to the general prosperity and benefiting from that prosperity. The crisis remains, however, both politically and financially. As M. Saint, the Resident-General, said in 1921, there was an economic travail intensified by a certain social *malaise*, as a result

<sup>59</sup> Sections 7, 22.

<sup>60</sup> Opening Speech in *L'Afrique Française*, Dec. 1922, p. 554, and proceedings in Jan. 1923, p. 31.

of which each section of the population was advancing extreme claims,—claims which were not so much critical suggestions as signs of an unsettled neurosis. And it was the “moral crisis,” the feeling of psychological repression and thwarted instincts, that made the economic crisis so severe, although this in itself was sufficiently grievous. The budget was unbalanced; the only industrial activity was mining; and the capricious climate weakened agriculture in a country where the whole basis of existence was primary production.<sup>61</sup>

In face of this position, the French are endeavouring to get back again in the psychology of 1914 and to eradicate the subsequent bitterness by resuming the earlier policy of association and traditionalism,—the “protectorate” policy of Paul Cambon. A mutual development in difference is the aim, but with a solidarity of economic interests and a division of labour infusing the necessary unity of direction into these varied efforts. That is, there is to be divergent evolution, coupled with a large degree of social and racial autonomy, within certain clearly expressed limits. There is to be economic but practically no political development, and, beyond that, a virtual freedom from interference for the various ethnic elements. The native is an agriculturist, the Italian a labourer and farmer, the Jew a trader, the Frenchman an administrator or capitalist,—that is the Tunisian division of functions; and economic solidarity along these lines is urged as the solvent of fanaticism and xenophobia. Thus, French policy had turned on its steps and is back to its earliest stage, save with a wider and clearer interpretation due to the pressure of economic forces, which are seen to be the link between Frenchman and Italian, Christian and Mohammedan, *citadin* and desert-dweller, Old Turban and Young Tunisian.

On the whole, Tunisia may be termed a French success, because the importance of the discontent since 1912 has to be tempered by a consideration of the world-wide Mohammedan unrest, and by a comparison of similar events, say, in India and Egypt. Over and above such a consideration, Tunisia clearly has far more association between natives and Europeans than Algeria, and there has been far less spoliation of the natives in general.<sup>62</sup> The present French difficulties, therefore, are not so much insoluble in themselves as based on the dislocation of that economic progress which was the greatest enemy of Tunisian unrest before 1912. When the unusual budgetary position and the decaying agriculture and the restricted commerce revert to normal, it is antici-

<sup>61</sup> *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1922, p. 315; *L'Afrique Française*, Dec. 1921, p. 429.

<sup>62</sup> But contrast M. al Asram et P. de Dianous, *Questions Tunisiennes* (1907), pp. 11, 18: “In Tunisia, it must be admitted, the rural native has been treated as rather a negligible quantity.”

pated that the native and Italian problems will largely decline, and, as Tunisia's riches are on stable agricultural and mineral foundations, and as the limit of development has by no means been reached, there is no natural obstacle to prevent this. The loan of 255 million francs in 1920 was a step towards the normal situation <sup>63</sup>; so too were campaigns for the industrialization of production. Tunisia, in its small way, is in a sound position,—far more so, indeed, than is Algeria; and, despite the severe nature of the crisis since 1918, it possesses every element necessary for its future progress. Moreover, since the *rapprochement* with the Italians and the concessions to the natives in 1922 have paved the way for the removal of the social cancers, the issue is becoming clarified of the complicating emotional factors, which have been so difficult a feature in the past. One scheme for the Bizerta port, or one public-works loan, is more significant than a score of *La Tunisie Martyre*, despite the uproar that accompanies such fulminations as the latter; and it is the more solid developmental aspect that France is stressing. The main fact in Tunisian history has been the *association* policy of Cambon and Alapetite. When that held, France was successful in the land and Tunisia was a shining example of French adaptability in the colonial sphere; and, now that that policy is being restored, the future may be judged from the past of the pre-war years.

<sup>63</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 30/7/20. Compare Flandin's speech in *L'Afrique Française*, March–April 1919, p. 110.

## CHAPTER VIII

### FRENCH WEST AFRICA

#### I. The Growth of the Colony

**A** GEOGRAPHICAL unity is given to the whole of West Africa from Mauretania to Nigeria by its common *hinterland*, centring round the Niger and Senegal basins and depending on the long sweep of coast. It is a flat country of river-basins and forests, the key to the whole being the dependence of the interior on the coastal outlets. The history of every part of West Africa, therefore, has been the story of the occupation of the coast and a gradual linking-up with the interior. This was especially the case with the French part, because, as it afterwards turned out, France obtained most of the interior but only a portion of the coast ; so that, with them, the relation of *hinterland* to coast assumed an importance even greater than elsewhere.

The French had been on the African coast for a long time, chiefly round the Senegal mouth. There, Dieppe merchants had gathered since the fourteenth century and there had been a permanent French colony since the end of the sixteenth century. But it was a lifeless settlement, especially after 1815, when it was one of the few fragments that were left to France. The rubber-trade languished, the slave-trade was turning elsewhere, and France, exasperated by the loss of her richer colonies, despised this African post. When Governor Faidherbe came in 1854, therefore, the colony consisted of a handful of trading-posts with a floating European population and some 17,000 natives. But Faidherbe changed all this and, with his delightfully simple policy of "Peace or Powder," really founded the colony of Senegal, and thus French West Africa, in its modern form.

He transformed a cordon of stagnant and isolated posts into a big territory, and added a *hinterland* to the coastal stations, in order to give the colony balance. To do this, he established relations with the chiefs, drove back the Moors and Toucouleurs, and cleared Senegal, keeping the peace thus established by his battalion of native *tirailleurs*. The land up to the right bank of the Senegal bend was organized and opened

to continuous trade. During the same years there was a spread along the coast, away beyond the English settlement at Sierra Leone to the Gold Coast and Dahomey. Isolated posts were set up between Grand Bassam and Porto Novo, and thus a footing obtained on the Ivory Coast and Dahomey colonies, because the new posts were not mere barter-places with a few coastal tribesmen but *points d'appui* for a logical and methodical expansion inland.<sup>1</sup>

By 1870, France thus had a compact block of organized territory in the Senegal, as far inland as Medina on the river, together with nuclear posts round the coast to Porto Novo. The next move was to spread inland round these nuclei, for otherwise the French would have only a precarious footing on the coast and no control of the interior trade. How rich this trade was was becoming evident, and how possible it was to tap it was first shown by the march of Magé (1861), who pushed to Segou and revealed the mystic Sudan, and then by Binger's expedition from the Niger to the Guinea coast.<sup>2</sup> France was going beyond the steamy mists of the river-mouths, unveiling the mystery of Timbuktu, and planning to connect all of the Niger lands with the coast. Magé and Binger, by operating from different points on the coast and in different directions, had shown that the isolated coastal-posts had a common *hinterland*, or, in other words, that West Africa had a unitary and unlimited economic future. The posts which had been contemptuously left to France as a kind of booby's prize in the international game were revealed as the threshold of a mighty economic empire; and the Sudan, Timbuktu, the Niger, all clad in a kind of mysterious uncertainty, entered the orbit of French politics, and appealed the more to the Latin temperament by their very romance and suggestion of things unknown. A field of commerce at a time when exploration was at its apex, an unlimited training-ground when Africa was beckoning to younger military leaders in France, and a huge emporium for trade and production at a moment when it was more than ever imperative that the colonies should pay.—all of these were offered by the African *hinterland*; and so France moved gaily to the task. This came about in the late eighties, when "France, for the first time, proceeded to a general definition of her African possessions" and attempted to convert the whole into one unity. Etienne, the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, dreamed of a union between Dakar and Dahomey, and even, through Timbuktu the Mysterious, with Southern Algeria<sup>3</sup>; and he was supported by the newly

<sup>1</sup> See accompanying maps. The documents for this early stage are in Dubois et Terrier, "Un Siècle d'Expansion Coloniale" (1902), pp. 216, 330 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Binger, *Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée* (1892), map at end of Vol. II.

<sup>3</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 2/12/91.



formed "Committee of French Africa" (1891)<sup>4</sup> and by the industrialists of the north who were needing the rubber and oil and other tropical products of West Africa.

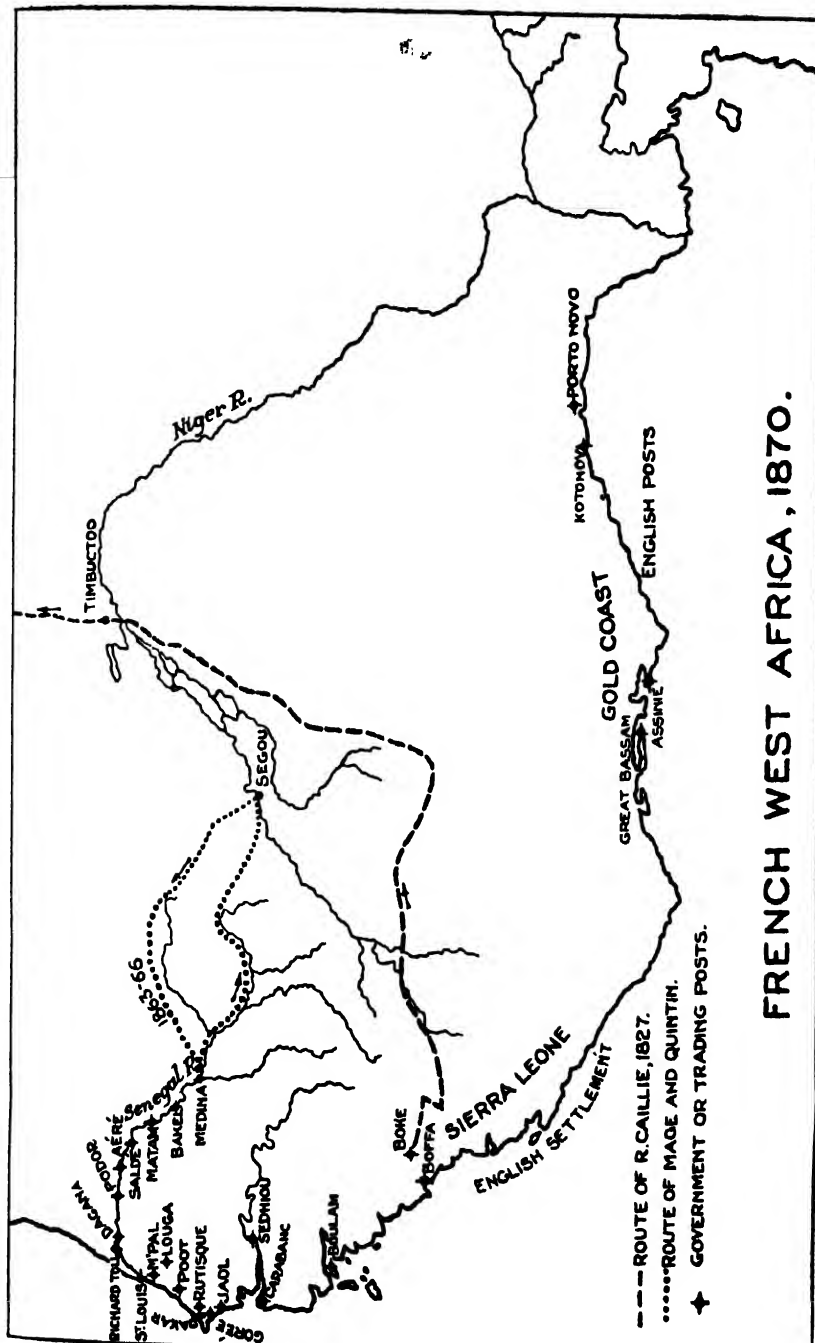
The stage was all set for the linking of the West African ports to a common *hinterland* of some 4½ million square kilometres, and step by step France went on. Faïdherbe had brought her Medina and the right bank of the Senegal; then the move was from the Senegal to the Niger, for the Sudan led naturally to the better-peopled and richer Niger valley; and, once there (largely by the occupation of Bamako on the lower reaches in 1883), the whole course of the river beckoned. At the same time, as Binger's expeditions had demonstrated, feelers could be thrown out south, and the Ivory Coast and Dahomey linked on to the general forward-movement eastwards, and ever eastwards to Lake Chad. It must be admitted that the French colonial school was intoxicated by this dream in the nineties, especially when it came to envision a move even to the Nile and the Indian Ocean. It must be admitted, too, that Faïdherbe's succinct despatch, "powder spoke," could have applied to most of this forward-movement, because it was in the main an imperialistic venture based on military conquest. Whatever economic motives there may have been in the beginning were soon thrust into the background and did not reappear until the conquest was effected.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, a military occupation of the land was inevitable. West Africa was divided amongst a few strong native confederacies, whose organization served both to hinder the French during the stage of conquest and to help them once the moment of consolidation was at hand. Various native kingdoms had arisen on the basis of the Songhai Empire of black Moslems, and for decades these determined the history of French efforts in West Africa. Thus, El Hadj-Omar had an empire between Timbuktu and the Guinea coast and unloosed the tribes between the two rivers in a terrible Holy War against the French.<sup>6</sup> On his fall, the more terrible Samory arose and consolidated the inland tribes, making himself the most difficult opponent France ever encountered in the colonial field. The conquest of the Omars and the Ahmadous and the Samorys made the occupation of West Africa far and away the most difficult colonial task of France. But there was the curious compensation that, to some extent, this pre-existing organization could be utilized,

<sup>4</sup> Through their monthly journal, *L'Afrique Française*, and its supplements *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1891 onwards.

<sup>5</sup> A full account of the campaigns is in P. Gaffarel, *Notre Expansion Coloniale en Afrique de 1870 à nos Jours* (1918), Chaps. 4-7.

<sup>6</sup> See his life in Le Chatelier, *L'Islam en Afrique Occidentale* (1899), or the account of his work in P. Cultru, *Histoire du Sénégal du XV<sup>me</sup> Siècle à 1870* (1910).



# FRENCH WEST AFRICA, 1870.

- ROUTE OF R. CAILLIE, 1827.
- ..... ROUTE OF MADE AND QUINTIN.
- ★ GOVERNMENT OR TRADING POSTS.

for instance, when it came to reviving the economic life of the occupied areas. The organization of the prosperous Akkia kingdom was a ready-made structure which the French simply had to take over,—with its cotton-industries round Dienne and Segou, its wools in Timbuktu and Gao, and its textiles as far afield as Kano and Sokoto. The conquerors simply had to maintain this vast system of inter-African trade and industry, and concentrate its external features on the French ports. There was a huge conglomerate economic world there, disorganized by the anarchy and the wars, it is true, but still ripe for the organizing, right across the Sudanese belt of territory.<sup>7</sup>

Early feelers had been sent out from the Upper Senegal as early as 1879, and then came the age of the missions, both economic investigations like Binger's and the more prevalent military patrol. The importance of the trade going out at Konakry and the realization of the wealth of the Guinea interior led to the occupation of the Guinea colony and a penetration to the holy city of Timbo in 1879. Then, with the Senegal and Guinea bases secured in the rear, the move up the Niger basin itself commenced in 1883, when Bamako was occupied. Eight years later Segou was reached, and a rapid move made through the rich multiculture province of Macina to Timbuktu and beyond (1893). A feeble footing on the Ivory Coast (1883) and a penetration of the narrow Dahomey *hinterland* (1890) rounded off the plan; and by 1900 France had control of a solid strip of the Sudan, comprising a prolongation of Senegal and Guinea inland to the Niger bend and with offshoots down through Dahomey and across to Lake Chad and thus the Congo. The Ivory Coast, because of its impenetrable forests and recalcitrant native tribes, was not yet linked up with the general scheme, but, with this exception, France had occupied a solid empire of three million square kilometres in less than twenty years.<sup>8</sup>

This was the most conspicuous triumph in French expansion, and the achievement was the greater because the economic mission, though subordinated to the military patrol, was never entirely neglected, and because the difficulties were so great.<sup>9</sup> An empire had been won, rich but only partly organized, and with its resources practically undeveloped. By 1900, having achieved the difficult task of conquest, the French were thus confronted by the far more difficult, because intangible and unspectacular, task of consolidation. The maintenance of the conquests of 1883–1901 depended on the spirit and nature of French organization,

<sup>7</sup> O. Meynier, *L'Afrique Noire* (1911), pp. 292–294.

<sup>8</sup> See Map 14 for progress, or Gaffarel (1918), *op. cit.*, p. 98.

<sup>9</sup> See lengthy reports of Brosselard, Binger, Faïdherbe, Paviase, and Madrolle Missions.

and the issue was still in doubt. It is a mistake to think that any final result had been achieved in 1900. The problem was just being posed, and only the preliminary obstacles, those due to the opposition of the native kingdoms, had been removed. As France soon perceived, the destruction was far the easier task. It was at the stage of rebuilding, when political and economic organization were just commencing, that the real difficulties emerged.

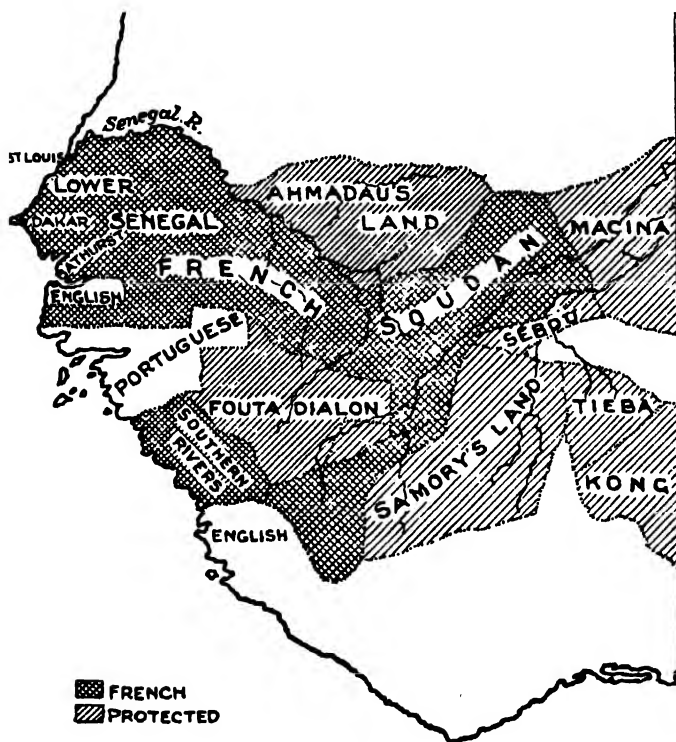
## II. The Organization of West Africa

The first and most obvious difficulty was that of control. In its final form, West Africa came to mean a territory of over  $4\frac{1}{2}$  million square kilometres and twelve million people,—that is, an area nine times the size of France itself; and conditions were such that European settlement was out of the question, and development had to be in native hands. But where was the problem to be tackled and what background was there for the reforms? It was realized that the success of any policy depended on its continuity, but how could this be obtained in a vast country, with practically no communications and with French effort split up between five or six separate governments? The one obvious fact at this stage was that West Africa was a single geographical and economic whole, and, as such, had to have its problems attacked by one directing agency. In other words, the necessary prelude to any organization or development was the establishment of a single government for all of West Africa. Without a federal administration there would be a series of disconnected local policies but in no sense a unified West African policy.

After the conquest, the first stress was therefore on achieving a federal organization. During the coastal stage the various colonies had naturally been quite distinct, because they were separated one from the other by foreign settlements and there was no land connection. There were thus four separate French colonies in West Africa, with Dahomey, by reason of its greater isolation, reckoned apart from the more westerly settlements. Each government was autonomous, and before 1895 there was not the slightest arrangement even for consultation between them. But the move to the *hinterland* had pushed certain common economic interests to the fore, and it was clear that the spoils could be better tapped by a division than by a mere duplicating competition. Moreover, the limitations imposed by Ahmadou in the north and Samory in the south showed that the problem could be attacked only as a whole, whether the local Governments so desired it or not. The move to the interior made co-ordination inevitable: hence came the first attempts at union in 1895.

The great difficulty in the way was the intense localist feeling, a feel-

ing which even as late as 1892 had found expression in a further splitting-up and the gift of financial autonomy to the Sudan. The four colonies (Senegal, Sudan, Guinea, and Ivory Coast) would in no whit diminish either their financial or administrative privileges; and so the first Governor-General, instituted in June, 1895, was a shadowy officer, aided



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by a Superior Council, but only vaguely uniting the four colonies, each of which was left its full autonomy.<sup>10</sup> But the need of a more effective union was made imperious by the realization that the common *hinterland* had been so far tapped that land communications had become possible. By the end of the century, conquest had given place to commerce, and

<sup>10</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 16/6/95; François, *L'Afrique Occidentale Française* (1907), pp. 15-17.

concerted action was needed for the development of the resources thus given to France.

The limited and prudent beginning of 1895 was therefore replaced by a closer union. A decree of October, 1899, pointed the way in dividing the unwieldy Sudan amongst the other colonies, thus making the *hinterland* accessible by giving each coastal colony a direct sphere of influence in the previously undifferentiated interior. A meaningless mass of back-country was divided into four markets, each with an outlet. Political organization was thus harmonized with the needs of a systematic exploitation, and the very fact of splitting-up had emphasized the unity of the problem, for the disappearance of the Sudan removed the most obvious difficulty in the way of federation. Hereafter the problem, at least from an economic point of view, was a single one,—a fact which was further emphasized by the next step of running a railway from each of the coastal outlets up to the common centre, the Sudanese basin.

Yet political organization lingered, and, although a large degree of economic unity had emerged by the close of the century, the position was still incomplete. The Governor-General directly administered Senegal; but beyond a vague spokesmanship of the whole of West Africa, had no independent power in the other three states. It was realized, however, that federal schemes were not only desirable in theory but by this time actual problems of policy. The facts of the situation demanded a general government for the direction of economic and commercial exploitation.<sup>11</sup> This was the key-note of the situation: as Doumergue, the Minister of Colonies, said in introducing the reform of 1902, there was no obvious political reason for federation, because, politically, the local governments had succeeded: the reform was essentially an economic one, necessitated by the facts of geography and by the presence of riches which, even when tapped only on the outskirts, had led to a commercial movement of 160 million francs in 1901.

These views found expression in a decree of October 1, 1902, which set up a real Government-General, seated at Dakar, with an independent budget, and relieved from the responsibility of directly administering Senegal.<sup>12</sup> The Governor-General was no longer administrator of one province with a shadowy and deeply resented tutelage over the remainder, but a federal functionary over all and distinct from all. His position was finally defined by a decree of October 18, 1904, which removed the last local charges from his budget and made it exclusively one for federal purposes.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Dubois et Terrier (1902), *op. cit.*, p. 514.

<sup>12</sup> In *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1902, p. 151; compare Terrier in *L'Afrique Française*, Nov. 1902, p. 383. Roume's speech on the measure is on p. 433.

<sup>13</sup> In *L'Afrique Française*, Nov. 1904, p. 336. For Guy's speech on its relation to the Senegal, see p. 373.

Hereafter he alone was the mouthpiece of the colonies and the interpreter of French policy : he had control of customs and public works and economic development in general : he was the nerve-centre of the federation. West Africa, with a considerable amount of decentralization imposed by geographical conditions and local development, was still essentially one whole. After 1904, there were a Governor-General and five lieutenant-governors in the provinces, with a federal budget and six local ones. Each province had administrative and financial autonomy, but certain powers were reserved to the Dakar Government, and, in particular, a general power of budgetary supervision. Briefly, there is a division of functions, most political powers, save those of general control and policy, falling to the local colonies, most economic matters coming within the purview of the Government-General.<sup>14</sup> As time went on and local susceptibilities were diminished, emphasis came to be more and more on the central government, especially as regarded the determination of policy. Thus in 1903, a loan of 65 million francs was given for the economic development of the whole group, and naturally the appropriation of this by the general Government largely affected the future development of the various colonies ; and similarly with the utilization of the new tariff which was imposed in 1908 for the construction of public works. The Government-General virtually decided the economic development of each of the component colonies, and here, rather than in its general co-ordinating function, was its real power. The reforms of 1902-1904 made possible the economic transformation of West Africa, and were on this account the most important event in the land's history. Without them, there would simply have been a continuance of the old unco-ordinated effort and conflicting policies. They made possible an economy and unity of effort, and, in so doing, made French West Africa.

With the passing of the years and the spread of influence further inland, this organization gradually extended. At the time of federation, there were only four provinces ; by 1924, their number had swollen to eight, the new ones being French Sudan (1920), Upper Volta (1919), Mauretania (1921), and the Niger Colony (1922), each of which came to have the full economic and political privileges of the original coastal-colonies. This gradual splitting-off was perhaps the best justification of the federal *régime*, which was shown to be elastic and capable of adaptation to changing circumstances, especially as the economic centre of gravity moved inland from the coast to the Niger valley. Federation has intensified both the local and the general development of West Africa,

<sup>14</sup> See Roume's important circular of 24/1/05, in full in François (1907), *op. cit.*, pp. 47-69.

thus affording a striking contrast to the stagnant localism of the earlier years.

### III. Native Policy

Federation was one preparation for the development of West Africa : another was the stock-taking from a native point of view. France had to know how much labour was available, and what kind of labour it was, for this would to no small degree determine the extent and direction of development, as Roume saw when he was elaborating his railway-schemes in the early years of this century. Events favoured her in this regard, however, because the character of the natives, after the initial conquest, imposed no such insuperable obstacles on development as in Algeria. West Africa did not know a serious or prolonged native crisis of the Algerian kind and consequently was equally ignorant of the thwarted endeavours and futile policies which were so detrimental to Algerian development.

The first fact that France realized, after the smashing of Ahmadou and Samory, was that, far from being densely peopled, "West Africa was a country without negroes." It was soon seen that her dreams of an inexhaustible reservoir of men could not come to pass, and that she was confronted by a shortage so obvious and acute that it was dubious if even the ordinary demands of economic development could be met. Even after the improvements brought about by peace and reform, the Census of 1921 showed the position clearly.

	Area (Square Kilometres).	Natives.		Foreigners.	Density (per Square Kilo- metre).
		Citizens.	Subjects.		
Senegal . . .	192,000	22,771	1,187,830	9,635	6.4
Mauretania . .	400,000	116	261,381	335	.6
Guinea . . .	231,702	489	1,869,322	4,748	8.0
Ivory Coast . .	315,000	308	1,541,788	2,749	4.9
Dahomey . . .	107,000	121	839,832	1,646	7.8
Sudan . . .	923,000	1,164	2,472,370	72	2.6
Upper Volta . .	300,000	17	2,972,918	316	9.9
Niger Colony . .	1,200,000	9	1,083,504	314	.9
	3,668,702	24,995	12,228,945	19,815	(av.) 5.1



That is, only in Guinea and the Upper Volta is the population adequate for the needs of development, although it must be remembered that, in some of the larger colonies, the above table, by taking into account the huge desert-areas, makes the position worse than it actually is. Despite this, the labour-shortage has always been, and remains, the basic problem in West Africa.<sup>15</sup>

On the whole, the natives are of an adaptable type. Of course, in a region of more than 3½ million square kilometres, there are considerable differences, although practically all are knit by a common agricultural life and a common loose Mohammedanism. This is especially the case in the Senegal and Sudan, where the future of the colony so obviously lies. There, all of the natives, save the trading Ouloufs, are farmer two groups in particular being the hope of West Africa. With the one of these, the Bambara, who cover much of the Western Sudan, and especially the region which France has chosen as the centre of her *mise en valeur* experiment, the agricultural caste is as esteemed as the warrior, and they provide the best materials for France in her developmental schemes.<sup>16</sup> More widely spread, the second race, the Peuhls, cover an immense area from Timbuktu to the Guinea coast, and are the pastoralists *par excellence*. Elsewhere, the native characteristics are not so marked, and, in the southern colonies in particular, orderly agriculture, with the notable exception of the cotton-cultivation of Central Dahomey, tends to give way to a more or less precarious forest-life. These men of the forest and the nomad Moors of the Saharan steppes offer little for the purposes of development, and it is to the Sudanese and to the gradual infiltration of new ideas to the interior, when up-country natives are attracted to the coastal factories, that France had to look.<sup>17</sup>

Despite this difference in potentialities, the basic problem is everywhere the same. The natives, Bambaras or desert Moors alike, have had their old life broken by the shock of European contact; the old order of tribal society, with its cohesion based on the unquestioned rule of custom, has been forced into the background; and the native, deracialized by the shattering of everything which has previously guided him, drifts disillusioned and despairing, now knowing no hope, and now, with the insane joy of the iconoclast, aiding the outside forces in rending his life from top to bottom. The past that is gone cannot be retrieved, the forces of economic modernization alone making that out of the question,—apart from the impossibility of retracing one's steps in a polity in which everything depended on the sway of custom. Yet the future is not clear, because the native, here a French citizen and there a mere

<sup>15</sup> *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1922, p. 59.

<sup>16</sup> J. Henry, *Les Bambara* (1910), pp. 1-11.

<sup>17</sup> G. Déherme, *L'Afrique Occidentale Française* (1908), p. 277 *et seq.*

"subject," does not know where he can fit in. Seeing neither a place for himself nor hope for his children, he drifts in a reckless despair or gives way to a care-free insouciance, both of which harm himself—and the French reformer. Or too often they find expression for their thwarted desires and the general futility of existence in their changing world (the worse because for centuries the only world they knew was one in which there was no change) in a careless abandonment to the call of militant Islam.<sup>18</sup> That is the force in the background, the incalculable factor always there, the uncertain element that may be either only a vague backing to native problems or the crucible in which everything native is thrust into ferment. Islam becomes the more real in West Africa in proportion to the growth of the disillusioned psychology outlined above: it provides an apt outlet for the repression engendered by that psychology, and thus is always, potentially at least, a grave aspect of the native problem.

This is the more so, because of its peculiar local characteristics in West Africa. Wherever Mohammedanism is found in negro countries, it is of a different nature from the fiery religious faith of North Africa and the East: it is rather a political yeast ready to flow over and give buoyancy and expression to latent discontents. That is, it liberates and provides a common rallying-ground for the isolated feelings of repressed instincts held by the natives. By the force of contagion, therefore, aided by the natural group-instincts of the negro, it transmutes the pessimistic thwarted feeling into a political movement, based on an emotional *furor* and made unquestionable by vague and dimly understood religious grounds. The West Africans are not susceptible to religious calls in themselves, but, since this peculiar interpretation of Mohammedanism enables it to fill a gap in their lives, they readily listen to prophets who preach discontent and non-co-operation, and, because of the political issue involved, and the psychological stimulus entailed, graft the precepts of Islam on to their original primitive mysticism.<sup>19</sup> That is the real nature of Islamism in West Africa, and that is why it is more than a religion (precisely because in itself it is less than a religion) in effecting the development of the country. Islam in North Africa means distinct political, economic, and social problems, but, after all, the problems are clear-cut; whereas in West Africa, their vagueness and intangibility make them more difficult, because Mohammedanism there is rather psychological and political than religious.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> For position, see P.-J. André, *L'Islam Noir* (1924), p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> Arnaud on "Psychology of the Moslem Black," in *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1912, p. 125. Compare *L'Afrique Française*, June 1922, p. 278 *et seq.*

<sup>20</sup> A. Quellien, *La Politique Musulmane dans l'Afrique Occidentale Française*, of J. Brevié, *Islamisme contre naturisme au Soudan Français* (1923), pp. 143, 231 *et seq.* The whole of Part III is excellent.

This is the more noticeable as the front of Islam advances south towards Central Africa, and explains such movements as those of the prophet Harris in the Ivory Coast in 1914 and Kabongo in the Congo. The eclecticism and accommodating toleration of the West African native explain the peculiar nature of Mohammedanism there, and, despite the official French policy of neither aiding nor attacking Islam in these regions,<sup>21</sup> make a constant vigilance and supervision necessary; and from that to intervention is but a shadowy change. Certain aspects of Islam easily fit on to the bases of native society (the economic concept of the family, polygamy, slavery, a fighting simplicity), and, because its aggressiveness affords an outlet for their disillusionment, they accept the religion because of the expression it gives them, and are untroubled by its dogma.<sup>22</sup> The outside religion is therefore always a complicating feature of the native problem, and is liable at any moment to become the dominant *motif*. Hence the force of Pan-Islamism; hence the frequent repercussions of outside disturbances on West Africa; hence the increasing number of politico-religious associations, even with the prosperous coast-dwellers; hence the strikes of black workers,—not in themselves serious yet a distinctly new feature; and hence the general ripple of antagonism, or at least of divided interests which, even in a negative or potential form, could always be traced in West Africa.<sup>23</sup>

The presence of this factor, probably by reason of its uncertainty more than anything else, has always directly affected French policy, and has led to a greater restraint and tolerance than in North Africa. Even now, France has only 7,700 Frenchmen to a native population of almost 13 millions, so that any policy ruthlessly and deliberately shattering native organizations, as in Algeria and Cochin-China and the Pacific, was out of the question. An aggressive policy of enforced and rapid change was neither advisable nor practicable; and so France progressed by a policy of non-intervention.

It is true that, during one of the triumphs of philosophical humanitarianism, the much-discussed experiment of naturalization was introduced to the Senegal, but this never became general and always remained an obstacle in the way of a sensible native policy. Senegalese citizenship dates back to the liberalism of 1830, but was limited to the four communes then effectively occupied. When the colony expanded at a later date, the policy, clearly opposed to French ideas as it was, could

<sup>21</sup> Faïdherbe and his immediate successors made the mistake of directly fostering Mohammedanism, but the error of this policy was perceived in Ponty's time (1908-1915). Cp. Brevié (1923), p. 257 *et seq.*

<sup>22</sup> L. Sonolet, *L'Afrique Occidentale Française* (1912), pp. 227-228.

<sup>23</sup> Arnaud, "L'Islam et la politique musulmane française en Afrique Occidentale," in *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1912, pp. 3, 113, 142 *et seq.*

not be extended, the result being that the natives of the four privileged communes became an isolated *enclave* in the midst of other natives disgruntled because, though alike in every way, they were not similarly favoured. They are, in short, an anomaly, and a decidedly troublesome anomaly, exercising, with the similarly privileged natives of the Old Colonies and the towns in India, a disruptive influence on general colonial questions far out of proportion to their real importance.

This was especially the case after an amazing incident in 1916, when, without examination or discussion, the French Parliament passed a law declaring these privileged natives full French citizens.<sup>24</sup> The idea was to give them some compensation for conscription and to remove the subtle distinction that had been worked out between the status of an elector (as were the Senegalese of the four communes) and a French citizen. But this outright declaration had consequences of which neither the thirty colonial specialists nor the forty jurists who were responsible for the law had any conception. This short declaration, in effect, did for a few Senegalese Moslems what had always been denied to the Algerian Moslems. It made them super-citizens, more favoured than the Frenchmen of France, because, in addition to their French rights, they were enabled to retain all the peculiar Moslem privileges regarding a *statut personnel*—polygamy, succession, and similar matters where there was a difference between French law and the Koran. That is, at a single step, the whole of French policy towards Islam—the gravest problem in the French colonial Empire—was reversed. The 25,000 West African negroes who were citizens upset the whole Empire, and friction continued until a law of 1922, a short law of six lines explained by 82 pages of introduction, reverted to the former position and, as elsewhere, made the renunciation of the Moslem *statut personnel*, the most prized possession of a Moslem, the necessary preliminary to naturalization.<sup>25</sup>

France has thus paid dearly for her original mistake of 1830 about these natives, both in West Africa and elsewhere, for the presence of this enfranchised minority serves to emphasize the gap between their privileges and the narrow scope offered to the others by French policy. It is idle to speak of slow and progressive change in a community part of whose members have for a century exercised the entire rights of Frenchmen, although these particular natives were not one whit more progressive or educated than their neighbours. The Senegalese communes are the only places in the French colonial Empire where citizenship is determined by a purely geographical consideration, the result being that there is a continual migration of expectant mothers to have their babies born

<sup>24</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 14, 23/7/16; Senate, 27, 30/9/16.

<sup>25</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., docts. parl., 1922, No. 4231 (Valude's explanation).

in the favoured communes. This relic of the old ideas of assimilation, especially since the whole issue was given a world-wide publicity by the *faux pas* of 1916, is a grave anomaly and has always menaced the success of native policy, both in West Africa and beyond.<sup>26</sup> The presence of this assertive minority colours the rest of French policy with a hue of charlatantry and insincerity: hence the feeling of almost cynical unrest on the part of the outside natives, and a ready turn to the seductive murmurs of the Mohammedan marabouts.

Outside of this glaringly anomalous patch, French policy in West Africa has consistently been based on the protectorate idea of Tunisia.<sup>27</sup> The ideas of Cambon and Paul Bert found a full and successful application here, even with the more backward populations. The native authorities have been maintained, and, even where the absence of any adaptability on their part made a change inevitable, others were set up in their place. The natives govern themselves under French supervision, and this has done much to minimize the disruptive features of the changes in their moods of existence, especially because with the utilization of native officials went a large degree of toleration for native customs, even those directly opposed to European concepts. For instance, there was the matter of slavery, which under the peculiar conditions of family economy in West Africa, was one of the bases on which society rested. It was abolished root-and-branch in February, 1901, but the abolition led to all manner of unlooked-for social and economic results. The changes involved did more to hasten the disintegration of native society than a score of previous policies: the tribes therefore protested, the Markas even rose in arms against the new decree; and the administration perceived that, in the given stage of native society, and with the complicated interactions between the various phases of native life, such a radical change, humanitarian though it was in theory, was not desirable in practice, or even practicable. The domestic slave was not so much an oppressed person as "an integral part of the West African family, society, and land-system," and not really badly-off. Since the failure of its reform of 1901, therefore, the Government, while preventing the slave-trade, has been forced to tolerate domestic slavery.<sup>28</sup>

France thus realized that, while she could guide and direct, she could not unduly force native policy, and that the axiom, *quieta non movere*, had a distinct economic and social significance in a society based on a largely immobile rule of custom. Native organizations are therefore

<sup>26</sup> Article in Dareste, *Recueil Colonial*, Sept.-Oct. 1916 ("Les Nouveaux Citoyens Français"), or *L'Afrique Française*, June 1922, p. 306.

<sup>27</sup> L. Vignon, *Un Programme de Politique Coloniale* (1919), p. 300 *et seq.*, or Ponty's circular in *L'Afrique Française*, October 1909, p. 348.

<sup>28</sup> Déherme (1908), *op. cit.*, p. 359 *et seq.*—an important analysis.





kept, and so are the ideas beyond those organizations. Thus, in civil justice, there is a choice between French and native forms, and, in the village and subdivisional courts at least, everything is under native control and ideas,<sup>29</sup>—a desirable feature in a polity where local customs count for so much, and where the native cannot understand the intricacy of the European code, or the meaning of appeal and conflicting judgments, or the significance of the protracted procedure, or pardons under the Berenger law of reprieve, and where gaol is a delight!

But France does not go too far in this turn to native organizations, and invariably imposes rigid limits beyond which the natives cannot pass. The chiefs of villages and cantons, it is true, have a practical right of self-government, but there is not as large a degree of native co-operation as in Nigeria and Sierra Leone, at least in so far as the higher posts are concerned. "To let them reach the higher grades," said a standard French work on West Africa in 1912, "would be as dangerous for our influence as for the execution of the work,"<sup>30</sup> and this represented the prevailing French opinion. Outside of the privileged communes and purely local matters, West Africa was either directly administered in *cercles* or controlled through the intermediary of supervised native chiefs, who, as it were, enabled the influence of the few French officials to be diluted and spread over a wider area.

Since the war, however, the growing sophistication of the natives and the French desire to enable them to take a greater share in the economic development of the country have joined to bring about a wider degree of native co-operation.<sup>31</sup> In the Upper Volta colony for instance, within the great bend of the Niger, there are already eleven councils of native commandants and notables. Their scope may be gauged from a list of the matters discussed at one meeting of the council of Dédougou on the Black Volta, at the close of 1922; the list comprised such matters as the native head-tax, new crops, aviation centres, telegraph-lines, stock-pests, transhumance, the condition of native women, the policy towards foreigners, the *état civil* of the native, and the like.<sup>32</sup> Here we have the basis for a considerable degree of provincial self-government, and indeed, it is almost a truism in West Africa that such local autonomy develops *pari passu* with economic advance, Dédougou, for instance, being in that Sudanese cotton-belt on which most of French effort has been concentrating for some time. To secure economic co-operation

<sup>29</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 7/12/24, for latest organization. For development, see *Journal Officiel*, 24/11/03, 22/8/12.

<sup>30</sup> Sonolet (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 24.

<sup>31</sup> J. Delafosse in *Dépêche Coloniale*, April 1918.

<sup>32</sup> *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1923, pp. 439-442.



under the conditions of West African peasant-proprietorship, the natives must have an independence of outlook and judgment which self-government can best produce ; hence the motive of the more liberal policy of the French in recent years.

The native policy pursued in West Africa has always been successful, even if somewhat limited in its scope. Faced with the vague menace of Islam, France has had to proceed carefully, and, save with the enfranchised Senegalese, has risked nothing on ill-advised experiments. The bases of her policy have been a gradually increasing co-operation with the natives and a minimum of change in native organizations ; and the result has been, if not a complete *rapprochement* with the natives, at least an absence of serious disturbances, an absence the more striking in view of the protracted opposition to the French conquest thirty years ago. The management of the natives, especially over so wide an area and in view of such complicating factors, has been the greatest success of the French in this colony, and the basis on which the various schemes of economic development since 1914 have been erected. This is the more important because the impossibility of French settlement and the difficulty of introducing outside supplies of labour made everything depend on native co-operation.

#### IV. Economic Development

Having solved the native problem, the French could turn to the details of economic development ; and it was Governor-General Roume's claim (1902-1908) to have placed native policy on the sound foundations outlined above, and then to have built up an economic programme on these bases.

The economic history of the land was determined by the presence of 13 million natives in a vast territory which was rich only in parts, and where the limited forests and agricultural lands faded into the great interior desert. Development in such a tropical country had of necessity to be in native hands, and the only choice was whether there should be European *entrepreneurs* using the natives as tenants, or whether the requisite capital should be afforded by the Government and the natives develop along the lines of a sturdy yeomanry,—a progressive peasant-proprietorship ? Inclination and necessity combined to favour the second of these alternatives, to the development of which the whole of West African policy, even education and land-settlement, has been directed. The policy is to develop the land by and for the native himself, since France deems that this is to her interest as well as his, as the lesson of the French Congo and the early policies in Indo-China demonstrated by

their failure. France turned to the peasant-farming idea of British West Africa, and made her economic policy conform to this goal.

The difference between the land-policies of West Africa and, say, of Algeria clearly shows this difference of direction. In West Africa the influence was on conservation rather than change, and on maintaining the land in native hands rather than providing facilities for European settlement. The decree of October, 1904,<sup>33</sup> which consolidated the land-laws, while it vested all vacant lands in the State, established the principle that native lands could not be alienated without the consent of the lieutenant-governor of the province concerned. Similarly with the decree of July 1906,<sup>34</sup> which allowed the natives to immatriculate or register their lands on the Torrens system. Some degree of individualization had to come, it was clear, because how otherwise could mortgages and credit-facilities in general be extended to the owners of group-property? But even here the French preferred to advance slowly and, rather than duplicate the experience of Algeria where one native could dispossess his fellow-proprietors and where facilities for individualization had too often opened a loophole for abuse, they limited the ease of converting group into individual property.

Faidherbe in 1865 had seen that cultivation opened the way for individualization and had even declared that the cultivated land should be deemed the property of the individual cultivator, but this was a step in the wrong direction. Forced modernization from a European point of view was illogical, so that, after a more or less undecided policy for thirty years, it was declared that the emphasis was to be on "customs and local usages,"—that is, on the native point of view in regulating land ownership and transfer as against the French codes which the early Senegalese legislation had tried to introduce. Land-policy was to be determined by native conditions and native needs, as the realities of the actual position were more important than the details of the *Code Civile*.

The decree of July 24, 1906, therefore, while it introduced the Torrens System of registration to all of West Africa, laid a primary stress on the prevention of abuse. Such facilities were given as would aid the development of a *régime* of peasant-proprietors, but there was no compulsory change. Illogicalities, contradictions even, in their land code were not as important as the consideration that the system, traditional and understood and trusted by the people concerned, should foster native production. That was the goal, the methods were secondary; and the French had seen enough of the breakdown of assimilation in Algeria

<sup>33</sup> In *Journal Officiel*, 26/10/04.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 4/8/06. Cp. François (1907), *op. cit.*, p. 203.

and the Old Colonies and in the first decades of Indo-China to want to introduce it in West Africa.

Educational methods were equally determined by the needs of the peasant-proprietors, although here the gain has been in tendencies rather than in actual results. Up to 1903 there was no professional education in a population essentially mechanical and no agricultural education in a country that is almost entirely agricultural. The only education at all was in a few religious and State schools that tended to turn out a de-racialized and useless product, and which did not serve to counteract the dangerous propaganda instilled in the marabouts' schools. Governor Camille Guy had exposed the ineffectiveness of this method of procedure and showed the folly of a purely literary education in a land of peasant-farmers. One of the most trenchant passages in a famous report he issued on native education ran :—

"A young Senegalese who knew all about the towns situated on the Loire and the principal events of the Hundred Years' War could not tell the principal stages of the Senegal River or give any indication of the actual institutions of France. Everywhere, there was a verbal and conventional education and a constant appeal to mechanical memory, and nowhere was there an education adapted to the needs of West Africa and of the populations who received it."

Guy found the natives reading and writing French, mostly without understanding it, and wasting their time on useless work.<sup>35</sup>

A decree of November, 1903, was therefore passed to reverse this position and to change both the methods and the aims of native education. The predominantly religious control now gave way, and a programme of State-schools outlined on the basis set up by Faïdherbe and Galliéni. Henceforth there were to be village and urban and regional schools, all in one connected structure and having as their *raison d'être* the turning-out of a native useful in the conditions of life as he found them. The mechanically gifted natives near the centres of population were to receive a craft-education; townsmen were to become practical trade assistants in commercial houses: and the great mass of the people, the sons of rural agriculturists, were to be taught to follow in their fathers' footsteps, but with that extra equipment that would make the son a more progressive farmer in the father's environment. Education after 1903 was to be entirely dominated by the criteria of utility. It was to be a system proportioned to the needs of rural West Africa and to an environment in which small-scale farming was to be the mode of life for generations.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Guy's report is in François (1907), *op. cit.*, p. 164.

<sup>36</sup> G. Hardy, *Une Conquête Morale: l'Enseignement en Afrique Occidentale Française* (1917), p. 4 *et seq.*

The aim was thus clearly defined, but vocational education lagged as much in practice as it was approved in theory, and 98 per cent. of the natives are still uneducated. The objective remains as clearly held as ever and is reasserted in the reforms of 1925; it is only the means that have been lacking, especially in the period of economies necessitated by the war and the post-war crisis.<sup>37</sup>

Policy in most directions has thus been adapted to the general need of developing West Africa along the lines of tropical agriculture in native hands. Native policy, land-laws, labour restrictions, education, and Government-aid all fit in together in aiding this trend, which received a great fillip by the success of native cotton and cocoa-production in the various foreign colonies along the West African coast.<sup>38</sup>

Ever since the conquest, the policy has been to aid a distinct specialization within each local area in order to strengthen the output of the federation as a whole. Following the usual method of French colonization, the parts were subordinated to the machine; hence the various colonies tended to become "monoculture" countries, producing a single crop, as with the ubiquitous groundnuts in the Senegal. It was practically only in the vast Sudanese *hinterland*, where the potentialities in themselves were far greater, that the older "multiculture" idea was retained. Elsewhere, it was in the main a *régime* of specialization; and corresponding to the groundnuts of the Senegal were the cocoa of Guinea, the timber of the Ivory Coast, and the oil of Dahomey. Of course, geography determined this even more than inclination, but, even so, it was a realization of this kind that was so important in helping to bring about union and in shaping French policy in practically every field. The result has been that French West Africa, at least since federation, has proceeded more according to a preconceived policy than in the other French colonies. The French here knew what they wanted and had a plan,<sup>39</sup> and this explains why the history of the colony has resembled the erection of an edifice rather than the haphazard *tracasseries* and frequent changes of method that so typified policy, say, in Indo-China and Algeria.

Given this point of view, the economic future of West Africa narrowed down to two considerations,—what products the natural conditions would allow, and which of them could be produced on a paying basis in such a country of great distances and limited public-works and scanty labour? Up till recent years, rubber attracted most attention,—indeed, more so than the position ever warranted, for the French were obsessed with the

<sup>37</sup> Eandace in *Journal Officiel*, 30/6/20.

<sup>38</sup> *Renseignements Coloniaux*, Dec. 1905, p. 484; 1923, p. 434.

<sup>39</sup> Retained to date. See Merlin's speech in *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1922, p. 47.

idea of making West Africa a second Belgian Congo. The desire to drain wealth from the country in such a rapid manner led to an unwise native exploitation and a neglect of re-afforestation projects. The result was that production declined and, once the wild-rubber of the forest was no longer available, competition with the plantations of the Orient was out of the question. The cheaper methods and more abundant labour of Indo-Malaya closed the door on West African development in this direction. Hence a decline, both in quantity and value, set in from about 1904. The 5,170 tons exported in 1904 dwindled to 3,080 in 1915, and thus the Sudan-Guinea region lost its richest staple and its greatest hope for the future.

Far from meaning stagnation, this setback served only to draw attention to the fact that, in a world in which tropical raw-materials were coming more and more into demand, oleaginous products were a far better proposition. It was in this direction that West Africa concentrated, until the cotton boom of the post-war years. The Senegal in particular flourished with its groundnuts, of which 166,000 tons were exported in 1913. This single product, while making the colony's history monotonously uneventful, at least secured prosperity: and it is argued that, given the necessary roads and an adequate training in dry-farming methods, it could equally transform the Upper Sudan and Middle Niger, in both of which the conditions resemble those of Senegal. French activity has therefore largely crystallized in this direction in recent years, the more so because the French market still absorbs more than twice as many groundnuts as her colonies can afford.<sup>40</sup> This is the staple of the northern half of West Africa: in the south, especially in the Ivory Coast and Dahomey, its place is taken by palm-oil, which allows a similarly well-grounded economic development in these regions. Before 1914, Europe imported 300,000 tons of nuts and 200,000 tons of oil, and about a tenth of these came from the French colonies. Here, again, there was a scope for almost unlimited expansion; but here, too, Malay competition was felt. West Africa could not advance without more modern methods of cultivation and crushing,—and these were practically unobtainable without supplies of outside capital and unless the entire industry was taken out of native hands.<sup>41</sup> The colony was feeling the defects of its dependence on the backward natives, and, as in the case of rubber, had to stand by and see its trade in palm-oil practically stagnant because of the rise of industrialized methods elsewhere. The conflict between these methods and the rudimentary family-methods of West Africa was the fundamental problem that was posing itself in the

<sup>40</sup> Report of Roux at *Congrès d'Agriculture Coloniale Française*, 1918.

<sup>41</sup> Cosnier Report (H. Cosnier, *L'Ouest Afrique Française*), 1921, p. 124 *et seq.*

decade before 1914, and on the answer the whole of the country's future depended.

Practically half of West Africa's exports are of oily materials, but of recent years other economic stand-bys have emerged.<sup>42</sup> The forests in the southern colonies, especially in the Ivory Coast, attracted attention at an early date, because this single province has far larger timber-resources than the whole of France. Almost half of its exports are of mahogany, and the limit of exploitation is nowhere within sight.<sup>43</sup> With timber, cocoa has also attracted attention in the same province of the Ivory Coast, especially after the transformation of the neighbouring English colonies with this product in the last twenty-five years. The crop has proved the most favourable under conditions of peasant-proprietorship and is virtually a new industry. From 1904 to 1908 the Ivory Coast produced only four tons a year; by 1923 this had increased to 3,600 tons, although cocoa was still secondary to timber and palm-oil. But despite the progress, the French record in this direction is not to be compared with the native production in the Gold Coast.

Since 1903, however, it has been cotton that has attracted far more attention than either of the above crops. Indeed, cotton possibilities have been the fact most emphasized in the colony's history, even if achievement in other directions has been far greater. It is France's dream to make herself independent of foreign cotton, because she imports more than a quarter of a million tons of raw cotton a year and employs 250,000 workers in the cotton-industry. Dependence on the foreigner for such an important primary commodity is naturally an ever-present menace to the country's economic security. It is for this reason that the cotton campaign has been more consistently pursued in the last twenty years than any other issue in French colonial policy; and this explains what seems to outsiders the inordinate stress on cotton in French colonies, the more so because it has implied a neglect of far richer and better implanted crops. As it was, however, Oceania, Indo-China, Madagascar and West Africa were all submitted to this urge, the last-mentioned in particular, because the best of the available fields is in the French Sudan, — "a potential Egypt," that huge swamp-region between Timbuktu and Bamako.

But the mountain of effort and, one might say, the continent of emphasis, have resulted in the tiniest mouse of achievement.<sup>44</sup> The

<sup>42</sup> See survey in François, *L'Afrique Occidentale Française* (1920), p. 7 *et seq.*

<sup>43</sup> Bertin's report, *Mission Forestière Coloniale*, 1918-1919, especially Vol. I, is monumental.

<sup>44</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Dec., 1923, p. 633.

earliest attempts at cotton-culture were in 1903, and the natives first produced American cotton three years later. But, despite the fillip given to production by the war, the average quantity produced between 1918 and 1922 was only 570 tons for the whole of West Africa. The only real achievement was that the twenty years of effort resulted in a clear understanding of what conditions were necessary, and it might reasonably be asserted that there is an obvious disparity between this gain and the expenditure involved. The reasons for the lack of results were many, and not always peculiar to the French possessions. The directing body, the "Colonial Cotton Association," which had been formed in 1903 to foster native production of American cotton in Africa,<sup>45</sup> secured only mediocre results in British and German territories as well as French. The natives for the most part stood aloof, because ground-nuts and cocoa paid far better than cotton, and what were the dictates of national policy to them? Even those who adopted the culture were little adaptable, because they were still in the spade-stage of cultivation and even the wooden plough was beyond them. A little millet and vegetables sufficient for their personal needs were all they wanted, and they had always been too oppressed and too much imbued with the psychology of "the under-dog" to fight for advance. Lacking incentives, they stood still. Then, again, there was a struggle between the local and the American varieties of cotton, and it was not until the failures of 1904-1911 revealed the unsuitability of the exotic varieties and the impossibility of haphazard development that even the aim was clearly evident.

Since 1914, to the contrary, the objective has been well-defined. As Governor-General Roume said, the plan must be "to produce American cotton by the native," although, of recent years, more emphasis has been placed on the European producer and director. Unsupervised native production has been ruled out, and the Government has assumed the functions of a vast *entrepreneur*. Moreover, the activities of the "French Cotton Association" have been more noticeable since 1914, and the problem was reduced to two essentials,—irrigation and communications,—both of which are necessary forerunners to any cotton-production on a large scale.<sup>46</sup>

The only way of producing cotton in West Africa is by irrigating the Senegal and Niger valleys. The latter in particular affords the desired conditions and has no less than two million hectares of river-flats available for purposes of irrigation. Various missions, notably the Bélimé Mission of 1921, were sent out to make the preliminary investiga-

<sup>45</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, 1903, pp. 50, 343.

<sup>46</sup> François (1920), *op. cit.*, pp. 22-29: see Map No. between pp. 320 and 321.

tions, and a proposition to irrigate 750,000 hectares by a canal at Segou sanctioned.<sup>47</sup> But this is only one phase of the situation, and, even given the necessary training of the natives and irrigation-facilities, the difficulties of communication remain—here as always the bane of West Africa. If the fertile Niger valley produces cotton, the goods have to be taken over 1,200 kilometres to the coast, and the only method of evacuation is by a difficult railway and the uncertain Senegal River. The question of transportation thus looms largely in the problem, but is held to be difficult and costly rather than insurmountable.

Notwithstanding these three sets of difficulties, cotton has remained the centre of attraction in West Africa since 1903, and more strongly than ever after world-production became stationary in 1913. France needs at least three million metric-quintals of raw cotton a year, and the sufferings following the crop-failures of 1903 and 1907 and 1921 brought home to the nation how great a source of weakness this was. Cotton-production became an obsession in the minds of French colonial experts, bridging the gap after assimilation had failed and before *association* had been accepted! It almost appeared as if cotton potentialities afforded the very *raison d'être* of Central Indo-China and the Sudan valley. This was one of the obvious cases where, despite the expenditure involved, the colony had to mould its development according to the needs of the mother-country. It was the national character of the issue at stake, together with the panic on the question, that accounted for the disparity between the emphasis on cotton-production in West Africa and the fragmentary quantities actually grown. In 1922 the yield for all of West Africa was down to 506 tons, yet cotton was the most debated issue in the colony's life,—indeed, since the various irrigation-missions, practically the leading force determining the direction of economic growth.

Needing raw cotton so grievously, France was staking the future of West Africa on the conversion of the Sudan into a vast cotton-field. Railways, irrigations, ports, and general governmental effort all crystallized in this direction; and the solid bases built by the groundnuts and timber and palm-oil of the coastal-regions were deemed to be chiefly raw-material for the transformation of the Niger valley. The *hinterland*-issue was playing as grave a part in the colony's history as it had done thirty years before, but in a changed and far more specialized form. Economic development narrowed down to a move from the coastal cultures to the exploitation of the Timbuktu-Bamako river-region,—an exploitation which has become the determining *motif* of West African

<sup>47</sup> Mission Béline, *Les Irrigations du Niger. Études et Projets* (1921), or Y. Henry, *Irrigations et Cultures irriguées en Afrique Tropicale* (1918), p. 187 et seq.



policy. A remarkably clear, even if somewhat chimerical, policy has been outlined, and there has been a unity of direction and effort quite unusual in French colonization. It was unusual to have the whole development of the country determined by economic considerations; and it was doubly unusual to have these economic determinants consistently held from the first. And although the actual achievement has been comparatively little and the whole project seems to minimize the natural and psychological difficulties, such a unity of effort augurs well for the future, especially in view of the turn from the unprofitable policies of the last twenty years.

West Africa has thus come to mean a ring of coastal-cultures round the Sudan-basin, and the Sudan-basin, though potentially a "multi-culture" region, has come to mean an irrigated cotton-area, an Egypt of the West. The economic programme of the colony is delightfully compact and simple; but whether the meagre returns of the last twenty years are a sample of the ultimate result, or only of the negative period of origins, remains an unsolved question. Certainly the projects for irrigation and State-aid and railways have changed the premises even since 1918, although it is still too early to say anything of the ultimate result.

Beyond oleaginous products and cotton, there is little in West African life except pasture. The pastoral industry, so suited to the leading race of the Peuhls, has always been one of the colony's most stable riches, but curiously enough (and this is found in every French colony without exception) the French have not been able to develop it to any great extent, despite a conscientious study of similar conditions in America and Australia. Before the flocks and herds were decimated by the great plague of 1919, there were about eight million oxen and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  million sheep in West Africa, mostly in the Sudan,—the Niger-bend where the Peuhls live.<sup>46</sup> Here, in the north, pastoral pursuits are increasing, although the increase is largely counteracted by an ominous decline in the south, especially in Dahomey and the Ivory Coast. Up to the present, cattle have been the only pastoral export, but there has been a continual decline since 1913. The outlook is far from promising, and one wonders as to the effective return obtained from spending a million francs on pastoral development as compared with the same sum spent on cotton projects.

On the whole, French West Africa remains an agricultural country, with a secondary pastoral industry and no manufacturing save for local needs. It is a country of forests and prairies, and, given the necessary labour-supplies and communications, of practically unlimited resources.

<sup>46</sup> François (1920), *op. cit.*, p. 76.

Émile Zola, in his *Fécondité*, made it the future centre for provisioning the world, and this conceit has some foundation in fact. Even putting aside the project for making the Niger a vast reservoir of cotton (though this is to remove the nerve-centre of the West African organism), the country can supply all the groundnuts, palm-oil, and timber that France needs, and, arguing from the model of the Gold Coast, a large part of the cocoa; and these are but the *immediate* returns.<sup>49</sup>

As in all agricultural countries, the extent of development depends on capital, communications, and labour. The first, in view of the country's undeveloped riches and the comparative popularity of this colony in France, has not hitherto afforded an insuperable obstacle. The last two have provided the difficulties. Communications and labour have been the clue to the country's travail, especially during the transformation of methods after about 1914. Until then, West Africa was concerned mainly with commerce and trade, supported by the groundnuts and oil of the coastal regions. There was both stability and ease of exploitation, but only within certain limits. As agriculture went inland towards the Sudan, however, the needs changed. Agriculture had to become more scientific and industrialized, the more so because the population was not relatively dense. But once increased production by these methods was sought, inexorable limits were imposed by the two factors above-mentioned. Labour was scarce, and, outside of the Senegal, was not found where the rich lands were: and then, what was the use of producing goods at Bamako, when they could not get from the Niger to the coast, 1,200 kilometres away, unless at a prohibitive cost? <sup>50</sup>

For some time after the conquest, the French laboured under the illusion that West Africa was thickly populated, and they visioned a huge black army as well as ample labour for the largest schemes of development. Accordingly, from the moment conquest ceased, the cry was all for railways. The Niger did not go to the sea in French territory, and the Senegal, the most obvious way to the interior, was navigable to Kayes only for 2½ months in the year and, at the best, was an extremely precarious passage-way. This left railways as the only medium of communication in such a vast country. As Governor-General Roume, the economic founder of West Africa, said in 1906, summing up the whole of the colony's problem:—

“The object is to open to civilization that vast part of the African continent given to France in the partition and which, by reason of its configuration, has so far been kept in primitive barbarism. The real cause of the

<sup>49</sup> Article by Cosnier in *Colonies et Marine*, 15/2/20, p. 85; *L'Afrique Française*, May 1923, p. 228.

<sup>50</sup> *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1920, p. 39

prolonged stagnation is that this rich region was separated from the rest of the world by the Sahara on the north, an inhospitable coast on the east and south and a dense curtain of tropical forest, all of which formed practically impassable obstacles to civilizing actions. Even in the interior, the lack or uncertainty of communications is still almost complete. Rivers encumbered by rapids allow only an irregular and inadequate traffic, and it is only round the great navigable bend of the Middle Niger that relatively important centres of civilization have been possible. The resources of science and capital, however, permit us now to open these countries, hitherto hermetically sealed by Nature, by improving the few natural sea-outlets, by correcting the defects of the riverways wherever possible, and above all by creating artificial routes,—the railways.”<sup>51</sup>

In West Africa, unlike colonies of the type of Indo-China, where there are more waterways, railways are the indispensable conditions of advance, because, outside of the coastal-fringe, economic development cannot be conceived without them. In such a country of distances, policy *must* converge on railways. Roume therefore made railway-construction the pivot of his economic policy, and quoted with approval Sir Walter Egerton's pronouncement of policy for South Nigeria and Lagos: “If you ask what my policy is, I should say, ‘*Open means of communication*,’ and if you would wish for additional information, I would reply, ‘*Open more of them*’!”

The position on paper was simple. The two river-beds of the Senegal and Niger sprawled all over the map. The former was navigable to Kayes and provided an outlet to the groundnut country, but it led to St. Louis, which was rendered practically useless as a port by the constantly shifting sandbanks. Every trade-artery leading inland from St. Louis had some grave disadvantage connected with it, and the town, which owed its growth rather to Faidherbe's choice in the early days than to any natural advantages, was situated several kilometres inland from the mouth of the river.<sup>52</sup> On the other hand, Dakar, to the south, had a fine harbour, a better position on the ocean-routes, and a rich region beyond. The Government therefore decided to make Dakar the port of entry for all of West Africa and to make their railway-scheme converge on this terminus.<sup>53</sup> The first railway was thus built across the burnt plains of Cayor to carry goods from St. Louis to Dakar (1887). That meant that goods could come from Kayes to the port by river and rail-

<sup>51</sup> J. Chautard, *Les Chemins de Fer de l'Afrique Occidentale Française* (1909), p. 7. Compare article by Governor Angoulvant in *Colonies et Marine*, Sept. 1921, p. 531. François (1907), p. 311 *et seq.*, reprints Roume's speech of 1901 in full.

<sup>52</sup> Articles by Rousseau in *La Géographie*, July 1925, *et seq.* *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1912, p. 370, or *Le Mois Colonial*, April 1926.

<sup>53</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 14/7/79. For history, see Chautard (1909), *op. cit.*, p. 9 *et seq.*

way, and thus France was brought to the fringe of the Sudan, the richest province of West Africa.

At this stage the second phase of the problem emerged. The Niger was navigable (at least for half the year) from Ansongo, right away beyond Timbuktu, to Koulikoro, the nearest point to Kayes. If a railway were run across the desert from Kayes on the Senegal to Koulikoro on the Niger, therefore, it would tap the whole *hinterland* of the Sudan and Niger. The Niger railway thus become the centre of attention in the early years of this century. It had been voted as early as 1881, in Ferry's time, but the anti-colonials, after strenuously opposing the original scheme, had on more than one occasion stopped its construction.<sup>54</sup> Under such conditions, it was not until the close of 1904 that the Niger was actually reached, and by this time the railway through Guinea had tapped the river lower down.

These railways were successful from the beginning. Indeed, the famous "groundnut-railway" in Senegal had doubled the colony's exports by 1901, and Roume, in view of this improvement, emphasized Colonel Thys' dictum about the Belgian Congo—"that the railway is not only a collector but a *creator* of transports, and that civilization follows the locomotive." This was obviously the case in Senegal, but it was an unusual natural phenomenon that gave most point to Roume's arguments. The French Parliament had hitherto been dubious about extending West African railways and had held that the Senegal River, especially now that it was linked by a railway to the Niger Basin, afforded a sufficient outlet. Just at the crucial moment, in 1902, the river itself took a hand, by failing to rise! Becoming unnavigable, it completely isolated the interior. Roume simply had to point to these facts and stand back, because no argument could avail against this striking object-lesson. His railway-programme was at once adopted in its entirety!<sup>55</sup>

He wanted a primary system directly linking the Niger and the whole Sudanese region with the sea,—Faidherbe's old idea of a trunk-line. This trans-Sudan railway was the pivot of the whole scheme, as it was to be the skeleton for the gradual building-up of the economic policy of West Africa. Yet, because the various colonies were only prolongations to the sea of a common *hinterland*, subsidiary local lines became necessary: hence the Guinea railway and the less vital extensions to the Ivory Coast and Dahomey. After all, however, these were not important for the Niger region.

<sup>54</sup> Compare *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 4/7/83; Chautard (1909), *op. cit.*, p. 14 *et seq.*

<sup>55</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 10/7/03, for law and reports on it. Hubert's report is in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., docts. parl., 1903, No. 848.

The organization of the Government-General in 1902 removed the greatest local obstacle to this plan, and the failure of river-transport had already disposed of metropolitan dogmatism. Hence, 95½ million francs of the loans of 1903 and 1906 were earmarked for railways.<sup>56</sup>

The actual advance, however, was not continuous, and by the time of his programme of 1906, Roume was forced to abandon the wider scheme and to concentrate on the lines in Guinea and the Ivory Coast. After 1920, the success of the Niger railways and the stress on the Sudan "multicultures" once more revived the original scheme, and, despite the tremendous difficulties, the lines were completed by 1923, at a total cost of 105 million francs,—more than 157,000 francs a kilometre. This meant a virtual transformation of conditions in West Africa. The Sudan was now linked to the sea the whole year round. Having an outlet and a market, this region had come to mean very much of the federation's activities, and internal development at once commenced. The region resembled the Senegal when it was traversed by the St. Louis railway thirty years before. Villages and towns sprang up as the railway advanced, and desert spaces were planted with groundnuts. The railway had made the desert fertile.<sup>57</sup>

The change had at least three important implications for the Sudan. In the first place, the natives were provided with an incentive for development. The trade brought in by the railway meant new desires, and the fulfilment of these desires meant increased agriculture. The natives were changed from listless idlers growing only enough for their immediate personal needs to cultivators producing for an outside market. They were flung, as it were, into a world of economic progress, and, as everywhere where modernization enters native life, this commenced a period of acute social change. Secondly, a fresh link was formed between the Niger and the Senegal. Up to this, they had been separated by the uncertainty of the Senegal River, and transport, inordinately dear as it was, was limited to essentials. Thus, West Africa, producing and wasting rice and millet in the up-country districts, was importing these products from Madagascar and Indo-China for the coastal regions,—an absurd anomaly. The railway changed this and enabled the Senegal, which can grow only groundnuts, to get its food supply from the Sudanese interior; and, vice versa, allowed outside goods to go inland and so to transform the life of the river tribes more rapidly. This meant, thirdly, a revolution not only in the economic life of the Sudan, but in ideas and general outlook. The moment of the sophistication of the Sudanese tribesmen was at hand, and the wines and perfumes, the sugar and jams that the trains brought in had an influence far wider than their own

<sup>56</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, 1906, p. 185.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 1923, pp. 582, 583.

intrinsic importance would seem to justify. The railways therefore enriched West Africa, transformed conditions in the Senegal and Sudan and shifted the centre of gravity inland to the Niger-lands,—that vast undeveloped “multiculture” country, with its alluring vistas of cotton and agriculture. Irrigation would begin where the railway left off, and more and more West Africa would mean the great interior. The various elements of the West African problem had all assumed different quantities by the completion of this railway, which itself was the consummation of a sequence of ideas and a general plan emerging for over forty years. It brought the Sudan to the coast, and lifted the concept of a West Africa centring on the Niger from the realms of imagination to the world of everyday fact. The transformation of the interior was hence-forward practicable, and indeed inevitable. The difficulties had been removed, the age of realization was at hand.

But no sooner was the struggle for communications partly solved than the labour-question emerged in all its grimness. The trouble in this connection is twofold. There is a general scarcity of labour all over West Africa, and an unequal distribution of such labour-resources as are available. The whole country has scarcely three persons to the square kilometre. While some parts, like Senegal and the Upper Volta, were sufficiently peopled, others had a dearth of men, notably in the Niger valley, which is the key to the whole French scheme of development. Until the trans-Sudan railway was built, the difficulty of communication minimized the displacement of labour from one region to another, and such emigration as there was was from the crowded Senegal into British Gambia and from the Upper Volta into Northern Nigeria,—that is, both away from French possessions. The railway, by linking Senegal and the Sudan, gave an impetus to an interchange in a direction healthy to France, and, even in the years of construction, the migration of native villages was a striking feature.

Despite this amelioration, the labour-difficulty in general remains unsolved, and apparently insoluble. It is at the basis of West African affairs and imposes an inexorable limit on progress. It confines the possible development to certain bounds, and makes impossible the realization of all the advantages which natural conditions would allow. Difficulties of capital and communication could be removed; the labour-shortage in such a tropical climate, and with immigration out of the question, cannot.

At first France did not realize the full import of this problem. While noticing that the population was not as dense as had been supposed and was annoyingly distributed from an economic point of view, the Government was not seriously troubled. This was especially the case

in the period from 1906 to 1914, when French colonial policy in Africa was dominated by the idea of providing "a reservoir of men" for military purposes. As has been seen, a general anæmia characterized colonial policy in those years, and the only objective that aroused interest was to drain the colonies of men. The country was content to mouth a phrase like "reservoirs of men" and ignore the facts of the situation. All that they could see was that the Belgian Congo had a native army, the Germans were using natives against the Arab slavers, and France had its millions of negroes in West Africa,—negroes who, lacking interests and needs, would not aid in their country's development and simply idled. From 1908 on, therefore, Colonel Mangin, the originator of the scheme, made the mobilization of these natives an actual political issue. The Budget-Report of 1910 adopted Ponty's formula, "20,000 *tirailleurs* in four years," and the project became law by an overwhelming majority.<sup>58</sup> This was only a commencement and the tendency continued<sup>59</sup> until the Army Commission in 1922 demanded 60,000 men a year from West Africa!

From the first, those who stood for economic development along the line of Roume's programme showed the suicidal nature of this policy, especially in a country so situated as West Africa was from a demographical point of view. As they demonstrated, France was on the horns of a dilemma in this regard. "The issue is whether we wish to make West Africa a reservoir of primary materials and goods or a reservoir of men? And we have not the right to choose. Raw materials are there in almost unlimited quantities, while men are found in very insufficient numbers."<sup>60</sup> More soldiers meant fewer workers, and there were not enough workers for the present stage of economic development alone. The two Governors-General of the time, Van Vollenhoven and Merlin, clearly pointed this out. To take 60,000 of the most robust men every year for a term of three years meant a continual mobilization of 180,000 men. Eliminating nomads and the useless sections of the population, this meant that, according to the Census of 1921, only 622,500 men, mostly middle-aged, remained to provide sustenance for twelve million people, not to speak of public works and the economic development of the land. Merlin holds therefore that such a utilization of man-power is not only unproductive but economic self-annihilation,—a deliberate weakening of the country's resources.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Mangin, *La Force Noire* (1910), pp. 262, 316 *et seq.* Debates are in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 8/4/11; 20, 22/2/10. The voting was 386 to 25.

<sup>59</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 19/6/12, for Millerand's pronouncement of policy in this regard.

<sup>60</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Feb. 1922, p. 109.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, June 1922, pp. 272-276.

The trouble is, as the above figure of 622,500 men shows, that the weakening is qualitative as well as quantitative. The total population is in itself too small, and the growing degree of enfeeblement in the last few decades makes the withdrawal of the physically fit doubly inadvisable. The changed conditions of life have entailed much depopulation, and, even where this was not the case, a grave weakening of the racial stocks. The health-position is one of the most melancholy features of West African colonization. There is an infantile mortality of 33 per cent.; alcohol and general excesses lead to decline; and, especially in the coastal regions, where the change has been greater, the stock is weakened throughout. The native finds himself appalled by his changing environment and too readily grasps the pleasant evils of the new order and discards the more difficult good points; and the result of too much incautious probing in this direction is ruin, both individual and racial. The old life was notoriously bad in many ways, but still it had a certain balance suitable to the environment in which the native had to live and adapted to the means of his existence. But French penetration especially with the speeding-up of evolution by railway development, has produced a general dislocation, a readily felt but inexplicable gap in native life,—a general lack of cohesion. In short, it leads to a disintegration affecting both body and mind, and too often placing a premium on bodily excesses, especially with a population predisposed to this and as emotional as the negro type. The result is an appalling lowering of the general standard of health, induced both by what the white man destroyed and by what he introduced. Tribal order was lessened and, with the lessening of authority, went a break-up in every sphere of life. At the same time, rum and wine and new foods and unhealthy *bric-à-brac* of European civilization came in. The naturally great troubles accompanying the introduction of a European economy were thus intensified. This was still more so, because the native population ground down from time immemorial beneath the heel of foreign conquerors, knew only the psychology of oppression. They lacked balance of character, and in particular, once the sanctions of a state based on slavery were removed, interpreted freedom as licence. Restraint was an unknown quantity in many regions. Both on the coast and inland, therefore, there was a general disruption, in the wake of which stalked physical decline,—the price paid by native races the world over for the mixed benefits of Occidental civilization.

The statistics on this matter in West Africa are appalling, especially when it is remembered that the whole future development of the colony depends on, or is at least limited by, the quantity and the quality of native labour. When war conditions necessitated a close survey of native man-



power, the position was manifested in all its weakness. French Guinea, because of the progress of peasant-proprietorship there, is by no means the most badly-off of the West African colonies : yet even there, of 3,000 recruits, only 115 could be accepted as physically fit, and these 3,000 had already been chosen by the native chiefs as the healthiest of their tribesmen. At Mamou, all save 35 were rejected out of 4,000 ; at Kindia, 1,331 out of 1,400 !<sup>22</sup> The deterioration of the native stock was thus beyond dispute, and these were the descendants of the men who had so strenuously fought for their independence under Samory and Ahmadou less than thirty years before ! And the difficulty is that the evil is not only a bodily one and thus remediable by extended medical facilities : it has a distinct psychological element which always enters to make the problem of native depopulation so aggravated and intangible.

The future of West Africa thus becomes jeopardized by the decline of the natives, and France has examined every possible alternative field. Chinese and Moroccans were tried for the Niger railway ; Annamites were brought in ; and there was an attempted convict-settlement. But the climate won in every case. Fate has dealt the French a vital blow in making climatic conditions such as will allow the labour only of the acclimatized negroes or the " red " races of the north, like the Peuhls. Development, therefore, is rigidly circumscribed, and France has to stand aside and watch the natural riches of the country lying idle and to a great degree unexploited. This is the supreme irony of her West African colonization—this partial paralysis of a latently rich land.

#### COMMERCE

The general commerce of West Africa has reflected the optimism and depression of these periods. From the first, there was a steadily growing prosperity, but the very likeness of the exports has been such as to occasion misgivings. Up to the achievement of federation, development was fragmentary and slow. The total commerce was 79 million francs in 1895 and 130 million in 1900, but much of this was due to military expenses and the cost of establishment, and to the trade from regions newly opened up, like Dahomey.

At the final moment of federation, in 1902, the outlook was not very promising. The Senegal had just left a long bout of yellow-fever, which had compromised its ports and general development : Guinea had only one section of its railway built, no credit for the rest, and little trade ; the Ivory Coast and Dahomey were virtually bankrupt, and all three together had less trade than the Senegal ; and the Sudan, lacking an outlet to the sea, simply did not exist from an economic point of view.

<sup>22</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, June 1922, p. 272.

But federation meant credit and energetic action and public-works, the result being that trade increased from 131 million francs in 1902 to 277 millions in 1913.<sup>63</sup> The budget-receipts, moving in harmony, went up from 27 to 88 million francs, and this progress was natural and continuous, as the table shows:—

	IMPORTS.				EXPORTS.			
	(Millions of Francs.)							
1900	.	.	.	69				60
1913	.	.	.	150				123
1916	.	.	.	144				106
1921	.	.	.	372				259 (franc at 62.5 to £1)
1922	.	.	.	351			311	62.5
1923	.	.	.	533			419	75
1924	.	.	.	764			653	88

The changing value of the franc detracts from the value of such a table, and the difference between internal purchasing-value and foreign exchange-value prevents any truthful reduction to one standard; but, despite these drawbacks, it is evident that there has been a continuous increase.

On the other hand, apart from the total values of exports, it is amazing how little advance there has been from a developmental point of view. The exports are still 85 per cent. oleaginous, as they have always been; pastoral products do not figure at all, outside of leather; and the new crops like cotton have not come up to expectations. Nor is France's share in the trade of West Africa increasing. The colony has never been assimilated to the *tariff-régime* of France, because of the enormous length of its land-frontier and the intrusion of five foreign possessions along its coast-line. Protection on the usual French model was thus out of the question. The result was naturally a larger share of foreign trade than was usual in French colonies, despite the limited protection which came in in 1905. France has very little more of West African trade, relatively speaking, than she had at the commencement of exploitation, and controls less than half the imports and only slightly more of the exports. Although the exports are almost exclusively the groundnuts and palm-oil and timber that France needs so badly, over 40 per cent. goes abroad. The French share of the imports is even declining, because of the competition of British cotton-goods, so important in native countries. This proportion would be far worse, if the more advantageous position of France in the Senegal, where she controls three-quarters of the trade, did not counteract and largely hide the hold of the foreigner in the other seaboard States. If France desired to monopolize colonial trade here as she did elsewhere, she has clearly failed, because the situa-

<sup>63</sup> Merlin in *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1920, p. 37.

tion has not changed as far as she was concerned, except perhaps for the worse. There has been a mocking consistency about it year by year, and France can do nothing to counteract the foreign competition, either by tariffs or actual rivalry.

### THE POST-WAR CRISIS

Despite this unfavourable allocation of trade, West Africa in itself was in a fundamentally sound position before the war of 1914. Because it was an agricultural land, this continued throughout the period of hostilities. Moreover, since there had been little boom and no wasteful alienation of the country's resources, as in Algeria, the colony was enabled to traverse the post-war crisis in a comparatively safe manner. This does not mean to say that the crisis was not acute. If anything, it was doubly acute, because the general mondial crisis was reinforced and intensified by a local problem due to the depreciation of the currency.

Up to 1920 the country's reserves and agricultural production enabled it to weather the crisis, although there had been a severe struggle, especially in Guinea. This colony, between 1913 and 1918, had to pay for its ill-advised economic policy. It had staked its whole future on rubber, and the natives, finding it cheaper to buy food from outside, had neglected other crops, with the result that rice had to be imported to an essentially agricultural province. By becoming a "monoculture" land on the model of Senegal with its groundnuts, Guinea seemed to go ahead by leaps and bounds, but the policy was at basis a suicidal one. The dependence on a single commodity introduced an element of uncertainty, and, when rubber prices fell, the inevitable crisis came. Revenue dwindled, trade went down to 10 million francs in all, and hundreds of the Syrian traders who monopolized small commerce had to go. But the experience was a salutary one in the long run, for the native perforce had to turn to cereals. As a result, Guinea once more became a cereal-exporting country by 1917-1918 and entered a stable economic phase, based on the industrialization of agricultural production. Its rich land and water-power made it one of the most flourishing of the African possessions, and already there were 254 native plantations by 1923. Guinea had weathered a particularly severe crisis and had become a model for the other States.<sup>64</sup>

By this time, the Senegal, formerly the envy of the other States by reason of its groundnut-staple, had also been flung into the vortex by the unprecedented decline in the price of groundnuts from 300 to 60 francs. Unlike Guinea, the land was so poor that no alternative crops were possible. Senegal was a "monoculture" land by compulsion

<sup>64</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Dec. 1925, p. 634.

rather than choice : hence, a fall in the price of its staple meant utter ruin. To make matters worse, the groundnut crop itself failed in 1921, and the Senegal, unable to keep its finances afloat, was compelled to fall back on grants from the federal Treasury.<sup>65</sup>

The other colonies were reasonably prosperous, although suffering from the inflation of the currency. This was the position when the world crisis of 1921 exercised its repercussions on West Africa. Despite the continued inflation, trade declined in its total amount, and the crisis was only weathered by the aggressive policy of the Government-General, which insisted on balancing its budget and carrying on as usual, despite the added burdens of taxation that this necessitated. By this means the malignant growth was cut out before it could reduce the patient to impotence. The period of economic readaptation commenced as early as 1922, and, taking depreciation into account, trade remained practically constant. The crisis had been met by facing the facts as soon as they emerged and by meeting the added responsibilities thus entailed.<sup>66</sup>

At the same time, the organization of economic councils in each group (1921) enabled an exhaustive survey of the country's riches to be made and eliminated the possibility of any resources remaining untouched.<sup>67</sup> The upshot was that, although West Africa had to confront the general French problem of depreciation, it was not made worse, as in Algeria, by an undue prolongation of the world crisis or by any peculiar local crises.

The colony remained in a sound position, and its affairs, especially when Sarraut's policy of public works extended to it in 1922, were characterized by an atmosphere of optimistic aggressiveness, shared only by Madagascar and Indo-China. It had had a sound development up to the crisis : that, together with the vigorous policy of its officials and the presence of its undeveloped resources, especially in the Sudan basin, enabled it to retain its prosperity. Hence, its claim was justified that it was one of the three most successful colonies of France. This is the more so because of the natural conditions and the recency of the conquest. Indeed, West Africa might have gone further in its boasting, and argued that its development had been more continuous than that of Indo-China and more intensive than that of Madagascar, so that, in every way, it ranks high in the list of French colonial successes, especially for its native policy and its programmes of agricultural specialization.

<sup>65</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Nov. 1921, p. 388 ; March 1921, p. 56.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, April 1922, p. 198.

<sup>67</sup> *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1922, p. 43.

## CHAPTER IX

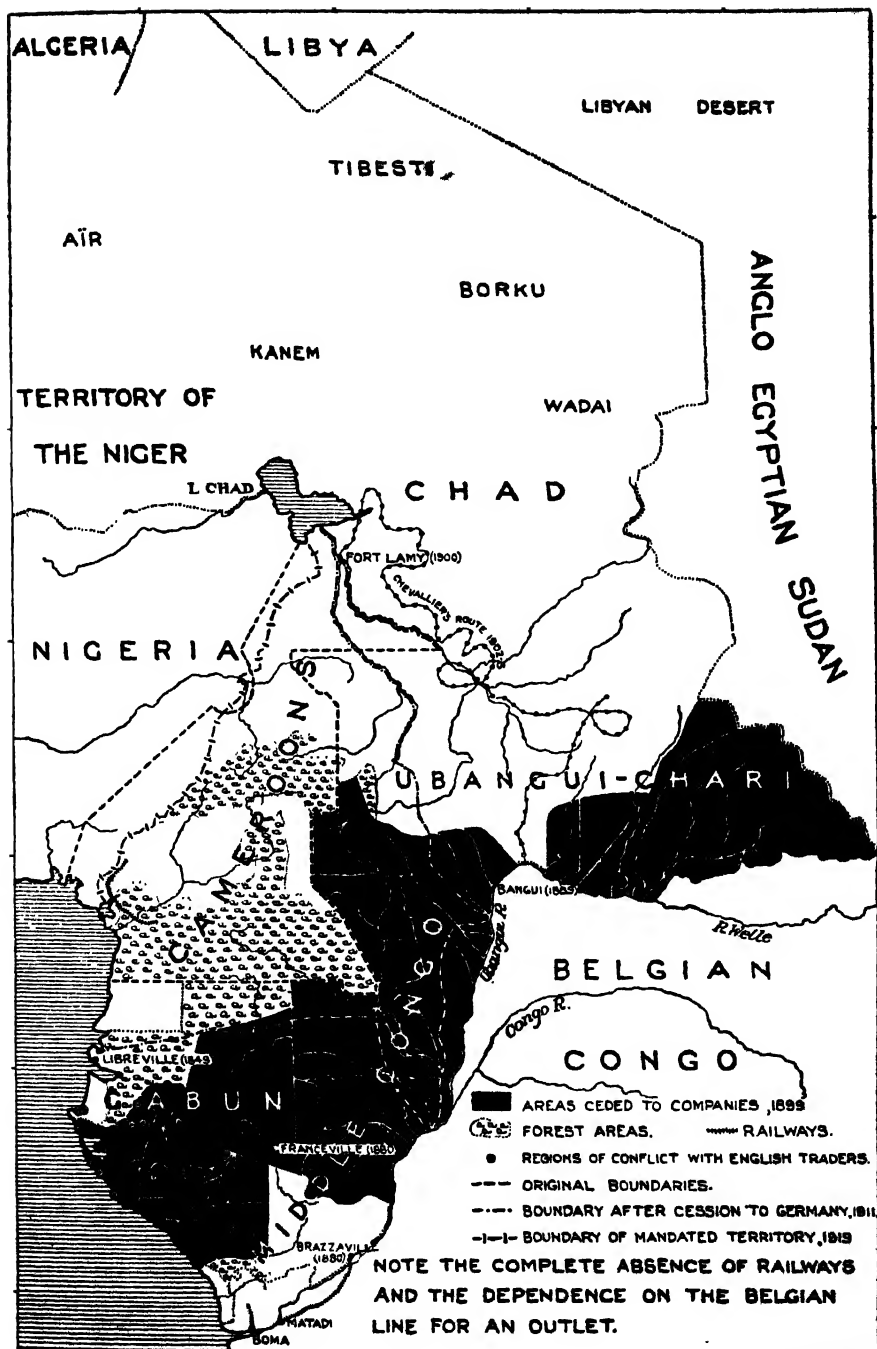
### FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA (THE CONGO)

#### I. Growth of the Colony

THE French obtained a footing on the Gabun coast of the Congo at an early date, because the caravels of Dieppe and La Rochelle naturally crept round from the Guinea posts. But, despite a rapid growth in the second half of the seventeenth century, all of this promising structure crumbled with old France; and there was no revival until France intervened in the thirties of last century to end the slave trade, or at least to see that it was not openly conducted under the French flag. To facilitate this, a concession of both banks of the Gabun was obtained in 1839 and, four years later, the building of Aumale fort revived the old tradition of French ownership. France was once more active on the Congo coast, and conditions quickly duplicated those of the seventeenth century. Libreville, founded in 1848 by the negroes freed from a captured slaver, soon became a centre of active commerce and the administrative post of the embryonic colony. Further treaties with the native chiefs extended the strip of coastal influence, until by 1875, France stood, hesitant but expectant, with her eyes fixed on the rivers that went to the absolutely unknown interior, a beckoning land of mystery. The Ogowé River, according to the natives, cleft the whole of Africa in twain and led direct to the Atlantic, so that its masters could drain the economic resources from all of mid-Africa.<sup>1</sup>

In the seventies, French explorers set out to ascertain how much truth there was in this tale and to see if the few trading-posts of the coast marked the end or only the beginning of the French colony. In the van was Savorgnan de Brazza, the man to whom the French Congo, in its modern form, is due. His first expedition of 1875-1878 disproved the tales about the Ogowé, but showed that it was still an indirect path inland, because the point where its navigability stopped abutted on the Alima. In other words, de Brazza had grasped the salient fact that the forest-interior could be penetrated by river-travel, step on step, and that the network of waterways, if not a path, was at least a staircase

<sup>1</sup> Ancel on the formation of the Congo in *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1902, p. 79 et seq.; M. Rouget, *L'Expansion Coloniale au Congo Français* (1906), p. 24 et seq.



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## DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRENCH CONGO

to the centre of the continent. His second expedition (1879-1882) realized the implications of this discovery. He founded Franceville on the Upper Ogowé and Brazzaville, opposite the Belgian post of Stanley Pool, on the Congo itself (1880), and these two posts became the nuclei of France's Congo lands. A treaty he arranged with the natives gave France a protectorate over a huge territory embracing all of the north bank of the Congo between Brazzaville and the Ubangui. De Brazza had thus transformed a hemmed-in coastal strip into a colony four times the size of France.<sup>2</sup>

Fortunately for the French Congo, the mother-country at this time was swept by what even the official accounts described as "a great wave of public opinion." French national pride was stirred by the Congo Association of 1876 and by the expeditions of the bitterly detested Stanley (it is amazing to note the vituperation still poured on Stanley in France). Accordingly, France directly fought for this vast Congo region, which was deemed to be the key of Central Africa. At the same time, it had become evident that the rubber-vine, discovered some three decades earlier, was found far inland, right up the Ogowé valley, and beyond as far as explorers had been.

Hence, as Rouvier said in the Deputies in introducing the law of November, 1882, to ratify the treaties arranged by de Brazza, France went to the Congo for trade,—“as a commercial nation, seeking not so much to extend its dominion as to widen its markets and civilizing influence.”<sup>3</sup> The wild rubber-vines, with their trailing festoons, had already entwined themselves round French policy in the Congo, like a sarsaparilla-parasite on a gum-tree; and, all talk of “civilizing influence” to the contrary, France was there for rubber,—red rubber. The French Chambers therefore waxed enthusiastic in ratifying de Brazza's treaty with Makoko and his vassals, and not even the anti-colonials of the day had much to say about this acquisition.<sup>4</sup> They opposed colonization *per se*, it is true, but this was different: this was merely taking over a vast reservoir of raw rubber and forestalling the other European competitors for the rich prize. Three and a quarter million francs were voted to organize the new territory (1883-1884),<sup>5</sup> and thus, without the loss of a single life, France acquired all of the northern half of the Congo basin, and perhaps even the unknown back-country to the Chad or even to the Nile swamp-lands. All in all, “it was an elegant and glorious page of

<sup>2</sup> Neuville et Bréard, *Les Voyages de Savorgnan de Brazza : Ogooué et Congo, 1875-1882* (1884), p. 150 *et seq.*, for documents; Ancel, *op. cit.*, p. 99 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 12/11/82.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 21/11/82, 3/12/82. The convention is in *Journal Officiel*, 3/12/82, or Du Clercq, Vol. XIV, p. 74.

<sup>5</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 11/1/83.

our colonial history," and France was prepared even to overlook the fact that the loathed Ferry had been responsible for the organization of the country and that it was a new weapon for the expansionists' armoury. The tricolour had been run up before Stanley's golden-starred banner, and France rang with the tale of Sergeant Malamine and his handful of Senegalese *tirailleurs* gravely welcoming Stanley's pretentious expedition at Stanley Pool in the name of France! Besides, rubber was coming down the Ogowé! The few trading-posts from Libreville to Boma had become a vast colony, and the future seemed a roseate vision of hope, rubber-lined!

But Africa did not end at Franceville, and the bush beckoned, its humid nostalgia notwithstanding. The interior beyond the rivers was now endowed with the same air of mystery as the old "Mountains of the Moon" had been half a century earlier. The age of militaristic expansion in Africa was at hand, and the new colonial military school, so active in the Algerian desert and West Africa and Upper Tonkin, included the Congo *hinterland* in its operations. And the rubber-vine still trailed inland, while on the east Egypt's cotton was an indisputed fact; and what lay between? Soldiers and traders combined, therefore, to move up the Congo to the Ubangui-bend, and beyond to the north and east. The move to the Chad and the Chari (1885-1895) was in many senses the ecstatic point in the French colonial movement, the peak of the colonial orgasm, so to speak. This was the moment when, following Under-Secretary Etienne's dream of 1890, France was gripped with the enticing vision of an empire from the Congo to the Mediterranean, and from the Senegal to the Nile basin.

There was thus a clear succession of steps to round off the Congo lands. De Brazza had simply wanted a *hinterland* for the Ogowé and to tap part of the lower Congo's trade. Then came a moment of quiescence when, in order to counteract British victories on the Niger mouth and to secure a share of the Niger trade, France agreed at the Congress of Berlin (1884-1885) to internationalize the Congo as well as the Niger.<sup>6</sup> For gains in other regions, she consented to become a partner in a curious colonial collectivism on the Congo. But this soon gave way to the new phase of winning the country north of the Ubangui bend.<sup>7</sup>

By about 1890 the French Congo consisted of two distinct sections, Gabun (the early coastal-region) and the Middle-Congo, de Brazza's river lands. Now a third layer, a distinct region economically, was

<sup>6</sup> British Parliamentary Paper, 1885.—*Correspondence regarding the West African Conference at Berlin, with protocols and General Act*, 5 parts.

<sup>7</sup> Documents are in Dubois et Terrier, *Un Siècle d'Expansion Coloniale* (1902), p. 626 *et seq.*



added with the penetration of the more northerly zone, the land that afterwards became the Ubangui-Chari colony. This movement was aided by the changed atmosphere in African affairs after the agreement of 1892 between France and the Congo State. This replaced the canons of the Congress of Berlin by an entirely new set. It was the virtual deathblow of the old international and free-trade ideas as the arbiter of Central African affairs, and introduced the newer idea of a direct connection between territorial sovereignty and distinct economic and tariff policies. The division of Africa had proceeded so rapidly and had advanced so far that the rules of 1885, theoretically desirable though they were, could no longer hold. The exploitation had become *nationally economic*, and France therefore moved the more rapidly to round off her Congo lands. Military, economic, and diplomatic considerations were all favourable and pointing in the same direction.

France had already obtained the Ubangui by a convention of 1887 with the Congo Free State, and was becoming intrigued with the implication of the discovery that it ran, not north as was supposed, but east,—that is, it opened a pathway to the Nile. This discovery, coinciding as it did with the wishes of the colonial party, naturally diverted French efforts for a decade to the east, the result being the move to the Nile and the *impasse* of Fashoda (1898). The Marchand expedition had set out to link Libreville with Obock, only to receive the most striking setback France ever had in the colonial sphere. The convention of March 22, 1899, not only excluded her from the Nile valley and deprived her even of the Bahr-el-Ghazal, but, at a blow, thrust back the Congo expansionist movement to its logical direction. The move east had been killed for ever.<sup>8</sup> The Chari and the new province of Wadai marked the bounds in that direction, to transgress which meant war with England. France thus had no alternative but to continue the northern expansion and the linking of the Congo with her West African and Algerian colonies. This in itself was a desirable and inevitable movement unwisely abandoned a decade earlier for the chimerical and really useless policy of spreading east to the Nile. France had cast aside a logical movement of expansion and a natural economic consolidation for a delusive vision of conquest, and had paid the price in a national rebuff, a discrediting of her entire colonial policy, and ten years of thwarted effort.

The result was that she flung herself more than ever into the northern sphere of activity in the Congo basin,—that is, back to the idea of Lake

<sup>8</sup> For this episode, see *Livre Jaune, Affaires du Haut Nil et du Bahr-el-Ghazal* (1897-1898); English Blue Books, Egypt, Nos. 2 and 3, 1898 (C. 9054-9055). French accounts are in R. de Caix, *Fachoda* (1899), p. 11 *et seq.*; G. Hanotaux, *Fachoda, le Partage de l'Afrique* (1909), p. 69 *et seq.*; and *Journal Officiel*, Depts., 3/4/96, Senate, 6/4/95.

Chad, back to the murdered Crampel's dream of having her three African empires converge and meet on this mystic lake of floating islands. The Chad was to be the pivot of an all-embracing African domain, and would make the Congo no longer an isolated fragment, hemmed in by German and Belgian and English possessions, but a part of the general French organization, deriving its vitality from the knowledge of that connection. The old enthusiasm of the rubber-stage, submerged as it had been by the expansionist disease and the *débâcle* which that disease had led to, was now revived. France was once more labouring under an obsession, this time of the Chad. This was the more so, because the move to the lake was interpreted as a kind of enfiling economic movement, giving a coherence to French efforts and at the same time shutting in other Powers more effectively to the sea. More specifically, the southern part of the unconquered territory had been the nucleus of the old kingdom of Baguirmi, the richest and most powerful of the pre-European powers, and the gate to Wadai, and the desert regions.

The spectacular move to add this northern *hinterland* to the Congo therefore started in earnest with the Fashoda check.<sup>9</sup> The ill-fated Crampel had started it in 1890, more by the emotions evoked by his death than by his actual achievements, and Monteil had reached Lake Chad three years later. But these remained unconsolidated efforts until Gentil, in his famous river-journey of 1897-1898, installed a Resident in the Baguirmi capital and thus brought France face to face with the sinister figure of Rabah, the ruler of the Bornu-Wadai region and the last of the great potentates who resisted the French encroachment in Central Africa. The campaign against him in 1899-1900 rounded-off the French occupation of the Chad territories, and three missions, from Algeria, West Africa, and the Congo respectively, joining at Kousséri on the lake itself, symbolized the essential unity of French Africa, and incidentally extended the Congo thus far north. Gentil had added the fourth colony, called the Chad itself, to the northern bound of Ubangui-Chari, thus giving the Congo federation its region of flocks and herds.<sup>10</sup> The territorial rounding-off of the initial Gabun posts was virtually complete. By 1900, France had the original coastal-forest, the two river colonies of the Congo and the Ubangui, and the pastoral region of the Chad,—four distinct colonies awaiting exploitation and development.<sup>11</sup> Between them, they made up a tenth of Africa, and yet, though their shape would make them appear to be an amorphous mass, and though

<sup>9</sup> Rouget (1906), *op. cit.*, pp. 137-159, or Dubois et Terrier (1902), *op. cit.*, annexes to Chap. IV.

<sup>10</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, August 1900, p. 266.

<sup>11</sup> See reports and organization in *L'Afrique Française*, Feb. 1904, p. 44.

they fell within three distinct economic zones, they were made into one whole by a common river-system, which was always the dominating factor in that vast roadless colony.

This essential unity was marked by, and indeed accounted for, the federation of 1908-1910, which set up a system similar to that of West Africa. Each of the four component colonies retained its economic and administrative autonomy; but a Government-General was set up at Brazzaville to give cohesion and unity of effort to the various local policies and to attend to common matters. The Aumale fort of 1843 had thus led to a huge river-territory, compact by the end of the century, and organized by 1910. By this time, France could face the question of development. The ages of discovery and conquest had passed, and had given way to the new stage when the more difficult problems of economic organization were in the foreground; and the trouble was that France had never been confronted with a problem having the peculiar local features of this one.

## II. Colonization

The problem was obviously a difficult one, especially because its very immensity prevented a grasping of the essentials and a feeling of mastery. Its scope made it difficult of comprehension, because, after all, despite the river-system which seemed to give the country such a unity as the veins do to the body, it was a soulless immensity with geographical differences that seemed to the French to outweigh the common features. When the problem of organization arose, it was not so much the connecting characteristics as the differences that became most evident.

Geographically, there were at least three vitally different regions. The most obvious was the huge tropical forest of 30,000 square miles running parallel to the whole length of coast and barring the way to the river-lands of the interior. This was the rubber-zone *par excellence*: beyond it were the two river-colonies, the Upper Congo and Ubangui-Chari, which were a kind of plateau-country, partly of rich savannah and plains, but merging into a treeless steppe-zone. This was the fertile region from an agricultural point of view, and gave way, through the pastoral lands round the Chad, to the Saharan zone of sand-dunes, the typical Wadai-Chad country. French Equatorial Africa, as the federation became known after 1912, thus resolved itself into a huge coastal-forest, an intermediate series of agricultural plateaux, and a pastoral steppe-zone gradually merging into the northern desert. And this configuration determined the country's development. The forest abutted on the sea and offered the easiest riches: therefore the whole of the colony's economic history has been limited to this belt. The agricultural zone

was feebly populated, shut off from the coast, and unhealthy : therefore it was left alone. The innermost region, the pastoral steppe, was left to native development. For all effective purposes of development, the French Congo was limited to the forest in the two coastal provinces.

The nature and distribution of the natives clinched this limitation of policy. In 1921 there were only 2,847,986 natives, that is, 1.3 to the square kilometre, and the great majority were of a low Bantu type. The most important are the Pahouins of the Ogowé basin,—recent invaders of some ninety years ago who displaced the primitive autochthones and drove them to the recesses of the tropical forest, where disorganized fragments of them still remain. The Pahouins were clearly the future race of the Congo,—independent fighters who were progressive cultivators but who left portage to the more debased negroes. Their energy was proved by their original conquering march and their gradual outward move within the Congo : and that they were adaptable became evident when they built blockhouses to keep out Lebel bullets, and transformed their methods of cultivation to capture the markets of Libreville, seizing the monopoly of manioc and other crops. The French, noting the debased forest-dwellers on the west of them and the maze of backward tribes inland, chose the energetic Pahouins as the basis of future development and have modelled their native policy on this choice.<sup>12</sup>

Beyond the Pahouins in the river-country is a welter of negro peoples, autochthones who, knowing no Pahouin inroads, remained more powerful than their coastal compatriots. None of them, however, can compare with the proud virile Pahouins of the lower regions, and they have lost all tribal individuality in an inextricably confused mixture. Everywhere, however, they are of the same degenerate negro type, living in small groups, and with a system based on fear, polygamy, domestic slavery, and cannibalism. Totally debased, they live only for the immediate sensation without much memory of the past or care for the future. They could only understand force, and the French claimed that such peoples could be influenced only by the Samorys and Rabahs and Behanzins who had bludgeoned them into service in past years. In truth, they did live a life of degradation and cruelty and bestiality, and it seemed difficult to find facts to justify their existence. Save for the Bandas, a somewhat superior immigrant-race who came in in 1868, the difference between them was only that some were lower than the rest. There were many competitors in this region to question the Bondjos' undesirable pre-eminence as perhaps the most degraded of human races, living only for raids for man-meat. Yet it was on such raw materials that the French had to depend for the development of the land !

<sup>12</sup> H. Paulin, *L'Afrique Equatoriale Française* (1924), p. 35.

Further north there was a third belt of natives, wherein the negro fetishism gave way to the southern limit of Mohammedanism. In general, the tribes in this northern region where the steppe changed to desert were of a more useful type. From Baguirmi north, Islamization becomes marked, and, as one goes away from the territory of the Banda and Banziri, on the Ubangui bend, the agricultural and pastoral regions are entered, and the abysmal degradation of the central river-tribes left behind.<sup>13</sup>

The hopes for the natives of the French Congo thus lie with the immigrant stocks,—with the Pahouin wedge in the coastal region and with the southern extension of Islamized tribes down past the Chad and almost to the Ubangui bend. These two elements are progressive; but, between them, the aborigines are useless and hopeless, and, even to a reformer philanthropically inclined, offer little save material for portage. The native problem which confronted France was thus a difficult one. The population in general was miserably scant: the bulk of them were animal-like rather than human in their characteristics: the progressive Islamized natives were not effectively under control until well on into the present century. Only the Pahouins of the coast offered anything at all when the French came, and France was not clear at first whether she should try to develop all alike or openly declare for this single stock. The natives in the main were thus a dead-weight in the path of advance, and it is little wonder that France followed the Belgian model and saw in them only raw material for a decidedly inefficient exploitation.

On the other hand, although the disadvantages of the Congo were so numerous, they were evident from the first. France could at once perceive the difficulties and the limitations imposed by geography and the natives, and could develop her policy accordingly. The French Congo was thus spared a period of attempted development based on factors which did not pertain there. Policy was from the first determined by the facts of the situation: indeed, the only criticism was that facts alone, to the detriment of humanitarianism and moral factors, influenced the situation. What France saw was a clearly defined problem. In front of her was a huge, rich, unhealthy, unorganized country, with tropical products ready for the taking but with no roads to take them, and with a labour-supply insufficient in number and as low in quality as could be imagined. How therefore could the rubber and timber be got out of the country at the least possible expense? That was the problem,—to surmount the natural difficulties, make the best of the obviously unsatisfactory native position, and drain the country of its

<sup>13</sup> *Annuaire du Gouvernement-General de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française*, 1913, p. 44 et seq.; Rouget (1906), *op. cit.*, pp. 354-380.

forest resources, especially the rubber. In a way, the whole matter was delightfully simple, and the only difficulty was in proportioning the means to the ends. In fact, a certain naïve disingenuousness and a ready rejection of all the duties usually associated with a colonizing power marked this period of French policy in the Congo, and dominated every act there.

Just at this time, when the Congo problem was becoming clearly defined, another influence was beginning to be felt in France. Colonization was becoming increasingly economic, especially after Belgium's success in the Congo and the general partition of Africa. Etienne had made this the basis of his organization of the French African Empire when at the Colonial Office. France was realizing that, her population and industrial position being what it was, and her colonies being situated geographically as they were, her colonial future depended on capitalistic exploitation. Ferry's *mot* that France had to colonize with capital and not men was passing into actual effect; and the conditions of Africa, with their stress on rubber and oil, served to point the argument. When the Congo question arose, there was thus a trend of opinion in France favourable for its solution. Development was to be by means of aggregations of capital, it was clear. It was equally clear that, in view of the prosperity of the Congo Free State and the Niger Company and the East African Company, this capital had to be organized on a company-basis. Conditions and inclination combined to foster a revival of colonization by powerful privileged Companies, especially because France herself, during her first colonial empire, had utilized such Companies as one of the bases of her system.

The actual fight for such Companies began as early as 1890, when Etienne, the Under-Secretary who really organized the colonies for the first time, urged their establishment, and later, in a much-discussed book, *Les Compagnies de Colonisation* (1893), amplified his points. Delcassé, the Minister of Foreign Affairs for the time being, supported him and planned to introduce monopolistic Companies by a simple decree. A new Ministry, alarmed by the scope of his proposals, submitted them to Parliament in a *projet de loi* of July, 1891,<sup>14</sup> but, caught in the political machine, they were shelved for six years. In the interval, a new Under-Secretary had quietly settled the issue by acting independently of Parliament and granting two areas of eleven million hectares in the Congo (an area a fifth the size of France) and three million hectares on the Ivory Coast, with no conditions save a trifling quit-rent (1893). These facts were not made known till two years later and, not unnaturally, led to a considerable

<sup>14</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Feb. 1891, p. 10; June 1891, p. 6; *Journal Officiel*, 17/7/91. Compare *Journal Officiel*, Senate, docts. parl., 1896, p. 42.

uproar, because the movement in favour of Companies in the interim had made the concessions the more valuable. The Congo concession, which was possible corruption and certainly a supreme indiscretion, was therefore annulled, certain indemnities being given to the holder, for what reasons it is not clear.<sup>15</sup>

By this time the position had again changed. The enthusiasm of 1891 had not only blazed up afresh but had become a veritable conflagration. Every one was speaking of "the colonial rush" in 1897-1898, and the subject had definitely forced itself upon public opinion. France was marching on past Timbuktu in West Africa to the oases in the north, to the Chad in the south, and towards Fashoda. A spirit of colonial adventure was in the air, and was associated with a curious idea of enormous riches to be gained. "Congo uncles" became a phrase of the day. France was rushed along by a semi-delirium, comparable to that neurotic exaltation that was felt in Spain when the silver of Mexico and Peru clad colonial ventures in a halo of riches, or in Holland when the trade of the spice-islands opened up. Now, it was tropical products, ready for the plucking. "Of the 90 million hectares which belong to France," cried Stanley, and the judgment was the more valued because its author was the arch-enemy of France in Central Africa, "there is not a single one without value"; and the country was intoxicated by a belief in a boom of unearned riches. Then Colonel Thys, the promoter of the Matadi railway in the Congo Free State, wanted a concession in the Upper Ubangui district in French territory at one of its most isolated points, and this, together with many claims from northern financiers connected with the Belgians, convinced France that the Congo region *must* be valuable. Speaking of Thys' application, an official French report said later, "the importance of the request and the personality of the asker grasped public opinion"<sup>16</sup>: and just then came the Fashoda crisis, with the desperately fighting frame of mind in which it left France, and the determination to win through at any cost in the Congo, despite England and all the other difficulties.

The result of all these influences was the amazing "rush" during four months of 1899. Paris was in a *furor*, and, a few weeks after Colonel Thys' railway from Stanley Pool to Matadi was opened (incidentally allowing an outlet for the French as well as the Belgian Congo), a Commission of Colonial Concessions was set up in Paris (1898). The result of their work was to introduce the *Concessionnaire* system into French colonization. They drew up a *cahier des charges*, outlining the obligations imposed on the new Companies and defining the position

<sup>15</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 3/3/95, 28/6/95; Senate, 6/4/95.

<sup>16</sup> E. Gentil, *Rapport d'Ensemble sur la situation du Congo Français en 1903*, p. 10.

in general.<sup>17</sup> In brief, they commenced by circumventing the relevant portions of the General Act of Berlin and the Declaration of London of 1899, which had insisted on equality of economic opportunity and the maintenance of native rights. Reserves were created for the natives in certain parts and a number of zones of free commerce set apart; and this was held to be a sufficient safeguarding of the rights of third persons and natives.

This preliminary difficulty out of the way, the Commission went on to elaborate the terms of the monopoly itself. The Companies were to receive exclusive rights over all "agricultural, forest, and industrial exploitation" for thirty years, at the end of which time all lands which they had improved and all forests where they had regularly collected rubber were to go to them in fee-simple. In return, they were to give the State a certain sum varying with the area of their concession, to pay a quit-rent of 15 per cent. of their annual revenue, to make certain roads, and to help to maintain police, customs, and military services. Beyond that, there were no limitations or obligations imposed on them, except a general proviso that no rights were to be exercised in native villages or on lands used by the tribes. A concession virtually meant the handing-over of a given area to a private Company, with its power untrammelled within that area,—in fact, the setting up of so many *enclaves* of practically independent trading kingdoms within the colony.<sup>18</sup>

The Government had also been preparing for the Companies in other ways. Even while the Commission of Concessions had been preparing its report, Guillain, the Minister of Colonies, had forestalled their recommendations by sanctioning a number of important decrees which reorganized the land and forest laws of the colony, the better to make them conform to the needs of the Companies. He had simply assumed that French land-law applied to the Congo and that the State was the legitimate owner of all vacant lands, *res nullius*. The point of this seemingly innocuous generalization was that the rubber-lands, the forests, fell within this category. Guillain himself was an engineer closely in touch with the affairs of the Free State, and therefore transferred the bulk of the Belgian regulations in this regard across the river. A second decree of 1899 made all rivers and a strip on either side of them public property,—a measure of fundamental importance in a country so utterly dependent on its waterways as was the French Congo. Thus, with all vacant lands, all forests, all rivers and river-banks reserved to the State, the way was ready for the Companies.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Pauliat Report in *Journal Officiel*, Senate, docts. parl., 1898, p. 13.

<sup>18</sup> G. Bruel, *L'Afrique Equatoriale Française* (1918), p. 430.

<sup>19</sup> These decrees were dated 8/2/99 and 28/3/99 respectively.



The rush for concessions was unprecedented. Between March and July of 1899, no less than forty *concessionnaire* Companies obtained privileges in the French Congo by decree. In all, monopolies were conferred over 650,000 square kilometres of land, a little more than the whole area of France. All of the land from the coast to the Ubangui bend, except for small areas round Libreville and Brazzaville, were claimed in this way, and, in addition, a huge patch on the Upper Ubangui,—all of the immediately or distantly exploitable area of the Congo.<sup>20</sup> It was only the fact that the area round the chief towns was specifically excluded that made it safe from the devouring maw of the *concessionnaires*. The effect of this rush was that the whole of the Congo was handed over to large Companies, with a registered capital of 59½ million francs.<sup>21</sup> The Government in practice abdicated its functions and limited itself to the imposition of taxes and the collection of quit-rents. It was, in fact, an amazing experiment in what might be termed a multiple delegation of sovereignty, although the actual text of the Companies' concessions allowed no such right.

With a fevered expectancy and ready either to give way to a rapturous ecstasy of speculation or to prick the whole bubble by an equally unreasoning panic, the French capitalists awaited the upshot of their colonial experiment. The first result was entirely unexpected. Certain English merchants had for long been established in the coastal regions. They at once protested against the monopolies as contrary to pre-existing international agreements; and the matter became a governmental one when the *concessionnaire* companies, even in the avowedly free-trade zone, forcibly seized various English factories. The French court at Loango (September, 1900) upheld this action and stated that the land did not belong to the natives and that, although the products were nominally native possessions, they could not alienate them to third persons without the authority of the *concessionnaire*. Moreover, went on the judgment, even the products were not the natives', because the native-reserves had not yet been delimited, and, until this was done, everything in the country belonged to the Companies! By this ingenious piece of logic, both natives and rival Europeans were deprived of any share in the products of the land.

Various appeal judgments further explained this curious interpretation of the law and of the Berlin Act. A judgment of the Libreville Appeal Court in 1901, for instance, held that, while a commercial monopoly was clearly illegal under the Berlin Act, the Companies were not

<sup>20</sup> J. Lefébure, *Le Régime des Concessions au Congo* (1904), p. 73.

<sup>21</sup> See Map No. 16 on page 339, or *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, 1/1/1900, p. 9.

affected by this limitation, because their functions were only agricultural and industrial! "There can be no question of a commercial monopoly," said this judgment, "because the rubber belongs to the *concessionnaire* Company, and not to the native who gathers it. The latter, in bringing produce to the Company, does not sell that produce, because he does not own it, but receives a bonus or salary as a remuneration for his services." As a climax, the Appeal judgment ended by nominally reversing the decisions of the lower Courts and allowing the English to trade anywhere, *except in the territory conceded!*<sup>22</sup> That is, practically nowhere! Trade for the English was over in the Nyanga district, although this was in the international free-trade zone, and was clearly impossible elsewhere. Other Companies followed suit in attacking them, and the year 1902 closed with the British expelled from the Congo and forbidden to trade either inside or outside of the free-trade zone.<sup>23</sup> But clearly France had gone too far in law and had erred grievously in admitting the element of physical force. The British Government took the matter up, and France, after receiving a strong Note, had to retreat, cede an area of 300 square kilometres to the aggrieved Companies, and pay a sum of 1½ million francs indemnity,—an enormous amount to the impoverished colony (1906–1907).<sup>24</sup>

Long before this troublesome issue was settled, however, the position of the French Companies had been vitally changed, chiefly because the less favourable results had forced themselves on public attention. Various Companies began to lose money, and the Congo at once became, not a reservoir from which riches could be drawn as fast as ships could take them away, but a desert which absorbed millions of francs without leaving the slightest trace. Montrozier was already speaking of the Companies as "the Panama of colonial affairs," and investors were disappointed when they learned that capital had to be sunk in the usual manner, instead of yielding immediate returns. They had expected to open a treasure-box: instead they had to make tropical farms, and the glamour parted with the delay.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> For the judgment of 1901, see Dareste, *Recueil Colonial*, 1902, p. 26; and for that of 1902, *L'Afrique Française*, Oct. 1902, p. 360, or Dareste, 1902, p. 56; 1903, p. 21.

<sup>23</sup> The English point of view of this controversy is summarized in *West Africa*, 5/10/01; *Le Temps*, 7/1/02, or the documents in *L'Afrique Française*, Nov. 1901, p. 380. The French is best stated in first report of *L'Union Congolaise Française* (1906), Chap. 17. For the stages of the quarrel, see E. Morel, *The British Case in the French Congo* (1903), pp. 72, 127 *et seq.*, or *L'Afrique Française*, 1900, pp. 372, 396; 1901, p. 17.

<sup>24</sup> Rouget (1906), *op. cit.*, p. 665 *et seq.*

<sup>25</sup> A summary of the controversy is in Captain Renard's booklet *La Colonisation au Congo Français* (1901) or *L'Afrique Française*, 1900, p. 253; 1901, p. 145 *et seq.*

The colony had scarcely left the exploration-stage when the Companies commenced their work. Much of the back-country had not seen a single European, and yet it was expected that development could at once take place. The normal course of events was clearly inverted; there was an attempt to have the *mise en valeur* precede, instead of follow, an inventory of the country's resources. The result was a good deal of waste effort. For instance, the lands held by many Companies were inundated for several months of every year, and the more distant concessions were practically isolated from the world of commerce,—yet nobody knew. Distances and marshes ruined the early Companies, and would have done so even had the direction and personnel been as efficient as possible. With aggravations due to the latter, the position simply became chaotical, a huge sink into which French capital was poured.<sup>26</sup>

By the end of 1903, at least a third of the actual and a fifth of the nominal capital was lost,—almost twelve million francs in all. And, although profits began to emerge in 1904, the Companies were still about two million francs in arrears at the close of 1906. By that time, nine of them had disappeared, twenty-one had a total deficit of more than nine million francs, and ten had aggregate profits of ten million, none of them being strikingly successful.<sup>27</sup> Apart from the introduction of so much capital to the country (and it is difficult to see how capital thus wasted could have helped the country very much), the Companies had not justified themselves in the first six years of their existence. Indeed, the only obvious advantages were a knowledge of the country and an organization of the rivers; and it can hardly be maintained that these were secured in the most economical fashion.

By 1905 the economic aspect of the matter had once more changed. It was now submerged beneath the humanitarian attacks, and it was here, rather than because of ineradicable economic faults, that the Companies met their doom. The red rubber of the Belgian Congo had become a byword in reforming circles, and scandals no less opprobrious had emerged in French territory. What prosperity there was had clearly been obtained by handing over the natives to a species of slavery and to abuses innumerable. French policy, never at any time particularly savoury in Algeria and New Caledonia, reached its nadir here. De Brazza, who had given the Congo to France, was despatched on a third mission in 1905 to see what France had done with his gift. The position the old explorer

<sup>26</sup> First report of *L'Union Congolaise Française* (1906), p. 4; Lorin in *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, 1908, p. 681.

<sup>27</sup> For yearly analysis of their operation, see Messimy's budget-report for 1909 or *Notre Œuvre Coloniale* (1910), p. 323, or second report of *L'Union Congolaise Française* (1910), p. 110.

found could not be disputed. Sick at heart that his vision of helping the natives should have led to such results, and with his beloved colony a stench in his nostrils rather than his pride, he died on the course of this expedition of inquiry, protesting against the iniquities of Congo administration.<sup>28</sup>

Government and Companies combined to bring about this situation, which was so castigated by de Brazza that his official report was never published,<sup>29</sup> but which his lieutenant, Challaye, thus summed up:—

“ The Congo natives live in a regrettable situation. The *Concessionnaire* companies make them labour for a trifle, using menace or even violence to secure their services ; and the Government, without rendering a single service, crushes them with taxes and *corvées*. Instead of being drawn towards the Europeans, as formerly, they doubt them and flee as far as possible. The routes habitually used by Europeans are almost denuded of villages, whereas formerly the natives used to cluster there. Regions described by the first explorers as inhabited and fertile have become deserts.”<sup>30</sup>

It is this frequently reappearing contrast between former prosperity and existing desolation that is the most striking feature about the report of the de Brazza mission. The Europeans had brutalized the natives and driven them back,—a negation of the Government's duty in a backward native country.

The faults were clearly divided between Government and Companies, the two, as may be seen from the previously-quoted legal decisions, working in collaboration. Guillaïn, the Minister of the Colonies at the time the Companies were set up, had issued instructions definitely ordering Government officials to view Company-agents as “ collaborators ” and to afford them every possible aid,<sup>31</sup> —a mandate that was given a liberal interpretation. The natives had been dispossessed of most of their lands by the preliminary decrees ; the delay in marking out the reserves deprived them of the rest. All products, whether on reserves or Company-land, were vested in the Companies, both by the Ministerial Instructions of Decrais (1901)<sup>32</sup> and subsequent legal decisions. All that the natives could claim, therefore, was payment for their labour in collecting the rubber for the Companies. Even this was deemed to be unwarranted, and the Companies insisted on their right of forced labour within their domains, just as the Government demanded *corvées*.

The result of this whittling-down of native rights was exploitation,

<sup>28</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Sept. 1905, p. 322.

<sup>29</sup> His last letter is in *Temps*, 27/9/05 ; but a full account of his findings is in his lieutenant's valuable work, F. Challaye's *Le Congo français* (1909).

<sup>30</sup> F. Challaye (1909), *op. cit.*, p. 232.

<sup>31</sup> Ministerial instructions of 24/5/99.

<sup>32</sup> In full in Morel (1903), *op. cit.*, p. 291.

the evidence afforded by numerous court-cases and the de Brazza mission being beyond cavil. The Companies, utilizing the clause in their concessions allowing them to keep order, instituted bodies of armed regional-guards, largely lent by the State or composed of Belgian deserters; and as one Company told its agents, "under the cover of legitimate defence, you can do all that is necessary for the Company's interests." Another circular termed the agents "*pirates au petit pied*," another referred to "that jewel which may be termed the Maxim" in dealing with native chiefs.<sup>33</sup> Hence came the Kongobouka trial (1908) where two native agents were convicted for shooting hostages, but the Europeans concerned were acquitted because they urged the Company's orders as justification! Hence, too, came the frequent revolts of the natives; for instance, at Gabun, in the Sangha region on the Ubangui, and on the Upper N'Gounie, the latter necessitating five relief-columns.<sup>34</sup> The de Brazza mission found certain Bondjo tribes who had been in revolt for upwards of two years, because the agents had raided the women and forced the men to work. It was a common procedure to build camps for women "hostages" and keep them there until the men performed certain tasks; and it is needless to add that abuses indescribable accompanied this system. Even on the well-managed concessions, revolts broke out, as with the Bidigris on the Upper Shari in 1904. So the dismal tale went on—hostage-camps, forced labour, revolts; until it was difficult to ascertain whether the old slave-trading conditions had been any worse than the new uncertainty and degradation of existence. Most pitiful of all was the depopulation entailed by the abuses. Right through the northern regions, where Gentil had found "immense plantations of millet and manioc" and abundance and prosperity everywhere, the last de Brazza mission encountered desolation,—“no more villages and scarcely any huts round the posts; no more plantations; the carriers do not know where to procure the least nourishment. Everywhere is desert and famine.”<sup>35</sup> From this point of view, slavery was the agency of the Companies, and depopulation the result.

But the Government, with its taxes and *corvées*, played a similar part in these years. They not only failed to stop the abuses, but actually encouraged them. For instance, an official circular of 1901 provided for "hostage-camps" for the women and children, if the men would not work. The most obvious abuse on the Government's part was in connection with portage. The only means of transport between the Ubangui and

<sup>33</sup> Respectively in *Revue Indigène*, 29/2/08, and *Temps*, 30/6/05, 8/7/95, quoted by Challaye, p. 190 and note.

<sup>34</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, 1902, pp. 182, 361.

<sup>35</sup> Challaye (1909), *op. cit.*, pp. 92, 84.

the newly opened-up Chad was by man-back, and all the food and supplies for the army of occupation had to go up this way. At first the porters were neither paid nor fed by the Government, and so were "raised" by black regional-guards. This "raising" and the concentration in "hostage-camps" and excessive portage did not leave sufficient time for the plantations, and so famine and depopulation stalked in the wake of the Government policy, too.

Read in cold print, the abuses seem indescribable, so unreal as to be almost bizarre; yet their existence was undoubted. The *cause célèbre* of 1905, the Toqué-Gaud *affaire*, drew attention to them and awakened French public opinion to the state of the Congo. This trial attracted more attention in France than any trial since Dreyfus, the more so because the country seemed ripe for one of those *furores* of emotional indignation which periodically break out in France. Toqué and Gaud were young officials in the Upper Chari, and their principal duty was to find carriers to the Chad. Toqué, a boy of twenty-four, had to produce 3,000 carriers a month, or the Chad troops would starve. How he obtained them was unimportant as long as they were there. He found established a system of slavery, regular raids, hostage-camps for the women, and terrible treatment of captives in gaol. The new-comers simply carried on the existing system; and no comment is necessary when it is known that they were condemned for shooting alleged delinquents at will, blowing-up natives with dynamite and a shameless disregard of native life in general. "It was a general massacre, in order to keep up the service," Toqué admitted. But, as the Brazzaville trial showed, such abuses were by no means local or due to the individuals concerned: they were the order of the day in the Congo, and it was the general administration that was at fault. As Toqué protested, "it was the negation of all administration" and positively necessitated atrocities, especially in a country where the bush-nostalgia, that dreadful enervation that assails Europeans under the general climatic conditions, already reduced restraint to a low level.<sup>38</sup>

A kindred abuse was in making advancement depend on the amount of taxes raised from the natives, as this extended all over the Congo the abuses that portage had entailed in the north. The case of Mongoumba, revealed by the de Brazza mission, showed what this system meant. Here, in 1904, an official, receiving the Government circular that his tax-receipts would determine his promotion, determined on a raid by his black auxiliaries. He accordingly seized sixty-eight native women and placed them in a windowless hut, where forty-seven of them

<sup>38</sup> G. Toqué, *Les Massacres du Congo* (1907), especially p. 92 *et seq.*, for details. This is one of the most striking documents in French colonial history. See Challaye, pp. 108-138, for a vivid account of the trial and the state of public opinion.

died! The subsequent inquiry broke down because of the difficulty of obtaining evidence: the administrator was promoted!<sup>37</sup>

Nor were these instances isolated abuses due to individual perversion. Inquiries and trials showed that they were accepted as part of everyday administration up to the Clémentel reforms of 1906. It was only where proved murder was involved that inquiries were held, and it was the difficulty of proof under such conditions that safeguarded the officials. The general attitude, even of the Brazzaville residents at the Toqué-Gaud trial, was that punishments of officials were sacrifices of individuals to inapplicable humanitarian codes and ill-advised measures. A general deterioration of moral fibre had been produced by the prevalence of such standards, and the native policy of the Congo up to 1906 remains the gravest blot on France's colonial efforts.

The combination of such economic weaknesses and native scandals led to a revision of the entire situation, especially because the moral self-flagellation of France in 1905-1906 was so extreme in its nature. For the moment, it was the most emphasized issue in French life, the excitement recalling the Dreyfus and Panama scandals. This culminated in a lively debate in the French Parliament in February, 1906, the result being Clémentel's decree of February 22.<sup>38</sup> This decree aimed at a complete revision of the Congo *régime*, especially at the elimination of those tendencies that were obviously ill-advised or inhuman. France was insisting, bush-nostalgia to the contrary, that conduct in the Congo should be subject to the same judgments as elsewhere.

The decree set out by eliminating native abuses in so far as it admitted them. There was a distinct reaction against the system which Governor Decrais had inaugurated in 1900, of cutting down expenses so much that no credits were asked for.<sup>39</sup> The immediate results of that policy had been an over-great aggregation of power in the hands of junior officials and a spread of *corvées* and native raids. All of this, said Clémentel, had to go, because it neglected the basic principle of native government,—that the administrator had obligations towards his charges. But if this was evil, what was there to say about Gentil's policy of making the Companies farmers of the taxes, the State receiving its due and asking no questions? Gentil had even issued a famous circular making tax-collection the principal care of administration. The system was that the natives paid rubber to the Companies, and the Companies paid the Government in cash,—a system open to innumerable abuses even where

<sup>37</sup> Challaye (1909), *op. cit.*, pp. 102, 103.

<sup>38</sup> Clémentel and Hérissé in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 22/2/06. See the general debate in *Journal Officiel*, 20-22/2/06.

<sup>39</sup> Second report of *L'Union Congolaise Française* (1909), pp. 15, 16.

the ordinary criteria of administration were in force, but as applied to Congo conditions, an amazing evidence of ignorance or indifference on the part of the Government. The Clémentel instructions therefore specifically said that tax-collecting "should no longer be the principal care of the administration," and forbade any indirect collection of taxes through unofficial agencies. At the same time, Clémentel declared against portage and for the institution of a corps of labour-volunteers from the coastal districts, but this was a theoretical solution unsuitable for the actual conditions. Here, the reorganization stopped as far as the natives were concerned. The truth was that, despite the popular uproar, the primary emphasis of the reforms of 1906 was to diminish the hold of the Companies as a preliminary to other reforms, rather than to introduce root-and-branch reforms then and there.<sup>40</sup>

Their primary aim was to try to restore the State's authority in controlling Congo affairs. But the State could do little at this juncture, because of the terms of its contract with the Companies. The evil had been wrought by the decrees of 1899 which gave the Companies so great power. The State had really abnegated its authority by an unwise devolution of power, and all that it could do, now that the mistake was realized, was to call a halt and prevent any extension of an undesirable position. In addition, if its resources on the spot allowed such a procedure, it could harass the Companies by insisting on a minute performance of all their obligations. The speakers in the debate in the Deputies were strongly in favour of such a course, urging the expropriation of such Companies as had not carried out their contract. There was one general clause, for instance, providing for default if the natives were harmed, and other clauses made the establishment of plantations and the replanting of rubber-vines compulsory.

Beyond insisting on the letter of the agreement, the Government could do nothing in 1906, as the legal advisers of the Companies had adequately looked after their interests. Clémentel's decree, in view of this situation, could only threaten them with vague punishments, and even then, only for *future* delinquencies. The Government did not feel itself strong enough to insist on courses it deemed desirable. For example, it wanted to make the Companies pay the natives in money instead of kind, and it wanted to let in rival traders because the concessions were not for "commercial" purposes: but, in the actual decree of February, 1906, it limited itself to a mere platonic expression of opinion in favour of money-payments and took no steps at all to prevent the Companies from illegally ousting free-traders. In a word, all that it did was to

<sup>40</sup> The decrees are in *Journal Officiel*, 14/2/06; the Clémentel Report is also in *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1906, p. 81.



sound a note of warning and bid the Companies go carefully. It rang down the curtain on the period of licence, but it did not institute the new *régime* of control and order. It showed a changed state of mind and hinted at the changes that would come in time, but that was all.<sup>41</sup>

The difficulty was that, however much the Government desired reforms, the time was not propitious for their introduction. The general trend, however, remained unmistakable. Messimy, in his report on the Colonial Budget in 1909, denounced the Companies as "a veritable negation of colonization,"<sup>42</sup> and there was a general agreement with the summing-up of the de Brazza mission, as expressed by Challaye :—

"The advantages of the system are more apparent than real, more temporary than lasting, and the disadvantages are many, grave, and permanent. From an international point of view, from an economic point of view, and from the point of view of native policy, this method of colonization is dangerous."<sup>43</sup>

In view of this attitude, the Government adopted the device outlined by Caillaux in the debates of 1906. He pointed out that, when the Germans had found the Cameroons concessions ill-advised, they adopted a policy of *cantonnement*, by which the Companies relinquished their rights over the original areas in return for increased privileges—fee-simple, for example, over a part. It was a *quid pro quo* policy, by which the Company obtained a realizable asset, and the Government re-obtained control over much of its domain. The point for France was that the moment had become favourable for such a compromise in 1907, because the recent prosperity of the Companies had been clouded by the fall in rubber-prices due to the American financial crisis. The Companies, dubiously afloat as they were, were now faced with ruin and were only too willing to restrict their sphere of operations, especially because they realized that the vast principalities which they had obtained in 1900 were far too large for purposes of exploitation.<sup>44</sup>

After a difficult negotiation, therefore, most of the Companies were induced to renounce their larger privileges and accept smaller grants, freed from irksome restraints. Agreements from 1910 onwards effected this in various cases, either by granting fee-simple or a more favourable form of lease over a portion of their lands. Some of the declining Gabun societies adopted the former device, and immediately gave up 5,910,000 hectares in return for 120,000 in full ownership and certain privileges.

<sup>41</sup> Challaye (1909), *op. cit.*, p. 204 note. Compare the limitations of Merlin's first reorganization (*L'Afrique Française*, 1909, p. 350).

<sup>42</sup> Report on the colonial-budget for 1909, p. 104.

<sup>43</sup> Challaye (1909), *op. cit.*, p. 195.

<sup>44</sup> Second report of *L'Union Congolaise Française* (1909), p. 8 ; *L'Afrique Française*, March 1911, p. 109.

Others, in the Sangha-Ubangui region, united on a more efficient basis, but still with a lease. They surrendered their long-term lease and their right of general exploitation for a new ten-years' agreement, with a right of exploiting rubber alone, and even that only on an area ten times the size of the improved area. The eleven Companies concerned in this exchange formed one new combine, and were thus able to afford more safeguards and to introduce methods which would not sacrifice future security for transient advantages. Moreover, this agreement meant that 17 million hectares of land would return to the State in 1920, when it could be (and actually was) partly re-let on still stricter conditions. The fusion was particularly interesting in 1910, however, because the rise of the *Compagnie Forestière du Sangha-Ubangui*, with its capital of twelve million francs, marked a reversion of French policy to the idea of one large monopoly,—something on the lines of the traditional Chartered-Company form which the English used in Nigeria and West Africa and Rhodesia.<sup>45</sup>

In all, twenty Companies compromised with the Government on some basis or other. The result was that, instead of thirty-eight Companies having exclusive rights over 874,140 square kilometres as they had in 1899, hereafter there were a few Companies in the coastal and middle regions and one combine in the far interior. Clearly, the Government had gained, because, by giving increased rights over 3,800 square kilometres, it had secured the reversion of 300,000 square kilometres—an area which had doubled by 1923. Under the conditions, this payment was not unduly large for the original error of 1899, although how needless it was from the point of view of the country's development may be seen from the fact that much of the area finally given to the Companies remained in its virgin state. The hiatus between the promise and the achievement of the *régime* of 1899 could not be more marked, and, to the French colonial experts, large-scale Companies absolutely failed as an experiment in colonization. Moreover, they had damned the Congo.

What, then, can be said to be the result of the Company-experiment in the French Congo? It is clear that some advantages were obtained, although at every stage the question arises as to whether equivalent or even greater progress could have been obtained under other systems. In the first place, 59½ million francs were spent on the colony, and, even assuming most of this to have been without return, much went on those preliminary works that are so important in a new colony. Then, too, trade increased. The Companies went there in 1900, when the total commerce was only 13 million francs: after that, yearly, it amounted

<sup>45</sup> For details of exchanges, see Girault (1923), 2.2.136-139, or Bruel (1918), *op. cit.*, pp. 439-441.

to 17, 21, 24, 29, and 36 million francs, and this steady increase must be directly attributed to the Companies. On the other hand, the Messimy Budget Report of 1909 pointed out that the free colonies of French Guinea and Dahomey knew an almost equivalent increase in their early years. Moreover, it must be remembered that the great bulk of the Congo's exports were of rubber and ivory, and thus more in the nature of draining the country of its resources than a desirable development. Lastly, the Companies paid considerable amounts to the State in taxes and customs. Up to 1906, the State thus received 3½ million francs from their quit-rent and profit-tax, and, after that date, 360,000 francs a year from the former source alone,—a considerable aid to the Treasury of an impoverished colony.

Those are all the items on the credit-side. On the other page of the ledger, the evils accumulated,—economic, governmental, native, and even international. The greatest of these was the wide question of economic policy. The economic life-blood of the colony was being drained away, and the superficial prosperity of the early years was inevitably leading to future trouble. A colony so situated could not afford a profit from the first and at the same time build up a sound basis for its future. In this case, exploitation and development were irreconcilable instead of complementary, and the stagnation of the Congo since the Company-*régime* must be attributed directly to this cause. It was an "all-for-nothing" policy, and, by its very nature, precluded a healthy gradual development. It meant the jeopardizing of the whole future for temporary advantages.

The most striking evidence of this was in the fiasco about replanting. The original covenant had provided for the planting of 150 rubber-vines for every ton of raw rubber exported ; but, as there was not the slightest degree of control, nothing was done until 1906, and then it was too late. In the Belgian Congo, even during the heyday of abuses, State supervision and rigorous punishments had led to the planting of 12½ million feet of rubber by 1905 : whereas, in the French Congo, so far from any reclamation schemes, the rubber resources had largely, and, to a certain degree needlessly, been dissipated. The goose was killed for the eggs, and the natives were prevented neither from cutting down the trees to get the rubber more easily nor from coarsening the product by an injudicious mixture of plants. Added to the prevalent neglect of the replanting clauses, such a procedure meant a weakening of the Congo. The ivory had gone, the rubber was going, as the trade-decline after 1907 was proving so clearly. France was already meeting the bill for the feverish and anti-developmental excesses of the first few years. The colony, as a result of the waste of those resources which it husbanded

would have afforded a stand-by during the troublesome period of public works, was left isolated, with its patrimony largely gone, and no works done.

In every way, therefore, the Companies failed, although it is impossible to dogmatize on the question as to whether the failure was inherent in the system itself or arose only because of the weaknesses of its application. All in all, it can be said that they were a mistake and their method of application preposterous. Even the *Union Congolaise*, the syndicate formed to be an intermediary between the Companies and the State, held they were needless in the coastal regions, and that there commerce would have developed equally under a free-trade system; and it may be added that, in the far interior, there was no place for them, for public-works and general development had not proceeded far enough for this species of exploitation. The advantages could have been obtained in other ways and by a far less sacrifice, and without involving future bankruptcy. In all, the experiment was inconclusive in the matter of colonization by means of Companies. This was because the obvious and incomprehensible absence of any governmental checks meant not a co-operation of Government and Companies in developing the land, but a stepping-aside of the Government and a heedless disregard of developmental and social conditions. The scheme, however desirable in itself, did not receive a fair opportunity, because Company-colonization does not entail always, as it did here, an unquestioned and unrestrained liberty to plunder. As an experiment in colonial methods, the Congo Companies thus mean little, although given proper control, such a form of colonization, so different from Chartered Companies, may have marked a new stage in tropical colonization. Lacking this control, it came to mean only a blot on France's colonial record, and a cause, contributory if not the main one, of the stagnation of the Congo since that date.

### III. The Congo after the Companies

Since the Company-experiment, the history of the Congo has been, in Sarraut's words, "short and melancholy." The colony became the Cinderella of the French Empire, and everybody accepted this verdict, as fairy princes and this unpalatable province did not go well together. The colony's record has been one of consistent stagnation, and the Congo is the only French colony that still needs a large annual subsidy from the metropolis.

Development was stopped for a number of reasons. The climate and the savagery and dispersion of the natives were the basic causes. Then, after the scandals of 1905-1906, and the subsequent economic breakdown, the colony drifted. France thought so little of it that, in

1911, she ceded 270,000 square kilometres of it to Germany, in return for rights over Morocco. The Congo was relegated to obscurity, and was neglected by both public and Parliament. It was viewed with the mistrust afforded to a speculation gone wrong. France was so ashamed of the enthusiasm of 1899-1900 and so associated the Congo with gullibility that the very name was unpopular. The Congo meant a "white elephant" to investors, worked-out capital to the opposition in Parliament, and a sink of iniquity to the humanitarians: and, before this array of misinterpretations, the voices of those who urged a quiet development of its tropical resources were not heard. Consequently, in the first sixteen years of establishment, France spent 350 million francs on Madagascar and 261 millions on West Africa, but only 66½ millions on the Congo, even in the period when the country was being denuded of its wild rubber; and there was a similar disparity with regard to the loans guaranteed by the State.

The stagnation is best reflected by the trade-figures, which showed nothing like the rapid increase so noticeable in the other French colonies. At representative dates, the totals were:—

	EXPORTS.	IMPORTS.
	(Millions of Francs.)	
1897 . . .	6.684	6. — de Brazza left.
1899 . . .	6.684	6.619—companies set up; Matadi railway.
1900-1905 (av.)	8.404	9.880—companies in operation.
1906-1910 „	12.518	15.823—period of company stability.
1911-1914 „	17.579	27.859—utilization of loan of 21 million francs.
1913 . . .	21.181	36.645—peak-year.
1914 . . .	11.224	16.722—decline owing to war.
1914-1918 .	9.834	20.066—average of war-years.
1919 . . .	9.763	29.293—franc at 35 to £1.
1920 . . .	65.612	80.691—inflation of currency (franc at 50).
1921 . . .	41.254	21.359—post-war crisis, franc at 62.5 to £1.
1922 . . .	26.465	38.562— „ „ „ „ „ „
1924 . . .	47.5	42.1 — „ „ „ „ „ „
	(Compare West Africa's 764.8 and 657.7; Madagascar's 259.0 and 387.5.)	

Taking into account the changing value of the franc and the imports for public works, the above table is distinctly unsatisfactory. The years between 1911 and 1914 were the only normal ones, and, save for the boom-year of 1920, the post-war period has seen not only quiescence but a positive decline.

The country produced nothing except rubber and timber; and of these, the first has been continually declining in the last twenty years, and the second is hindered by freight-considerations and the competition of West Africa. The rubber is still wild, and, as in other French colonies,

wild rubber finds it increasingly difficult to compete with the plantation-products of the Far East. In the Orient, there were no less than 13 million trees in 1906, the year when France realized the menace thus implied for the future development of her colonies, and the great majority of these *para*-rubber trees came into bearing in 1915.<sup>46</sup> Rubber in the Congo was clearly a declining factor: hence, the Europeans have created the palm-oil industry and turned with renewed zeal to the exploitation of the colony's lumber resources. The Congo is the most richly wooded of all the French colonies, although so great was the hold of the rubber-idea that the exports never went much beyond 5,000 tons to 1902. After that, they progressed to 60,000 tons by 1908 and 150,000 tons by 1913, although there has been a decline since that date, due to the lack of labour and the difficulty of communications. Owing to unwise exploitation in the peak-period and the devastating habits of the Pahouins, production now costs far more than in the first stages; and the pre-war prosperity has never been resumed, although the difficulties are incidental rather than permanent.

As an alternative, the palm-oil industry was promoted in the coastal districts of Gabun, and, in recent years, has vied with timber in being the second staple of the colony. An average of 8,000 tons of nuts and 400 tons of oil were exported, the industry still being in its initial stages and capable of a great expansion. Beyond these three staples—a practically moribund rubber-industry, a backward but reviving timber-trade, and a promising palm-oil industry,—the French Congo has no development. Iron is abundant, coal is known, and important copper deposits are worked on the Middle Congo, but all of these are secondary. Pasture, concentrated in the Sudan zone of the Chad, is important, but looks to Nigeria and the Egyptian Sudan for a market rather than south to the Congo federation. There is no industry, despite the adequate water-power, and a declining trade. In a word, despite its natural riches, the country is, to use the official French phrase, "quite undeveloped." A contrast with Madagascar and West Africa, both of which were established about the same time, shows the stagnation of the Congo,—a stagnation not marked by any hopeful feature.

This is largely due to the absence of public works and communications, so essential in a country as huge as this is, and with the interminable forest preventing easy natural transit between the interior and the coast. It is true that the colony has had two loans largely earmarked for this purpose (21 million francs in 1909 and 171 million francs in 1920); but these were insufficient and overlong delayed, so that by 1924, the colony had few roads and not a kilometre of railway, beyond a tiny

<sup>46</sup> In detail in second report of *L'Union Congolaise Française* (1909), p. 36.

mineral-line to evacuate the Mindouli copper.<sup>47</sup> It is an amazing tale of ineptitude and lost opportunities. For a long time, Brazzaville, the capital, could be reached only by the portage-route through the Mayombé forest and a hostile native region. Even in the next phase, the outlet of Congo produce depended on the Matadi-Leopoldville line, built by the Belgians in 1898. A foreign Power thus had a dagger at the throat of the French Congo and could terminate its economic life at will. All of the products of the Congo zone came to concentrate on Stanley Pool, the Belgian *rendezvous*, and France was at once reduced to the status of a customer instead of the owner and controller of the whole scheme. She was an economic satellite, only tolerated as long as her actions were not harmful to the Belgians. The economic history of the whole Congo basin, including, of course, the French colony, has been that of the Belgian railway. The position is the more incomprehensible, since there are at least two valleys in the French territory opening towards the Congo artery and affording a shorter and less difficult route than that followed by the Belgian line.

The trouble is that the goods can come by water only as far as Brazzaville, which is 400 kilometres inland. At that point, the river meets the mountain and communicates with the sea only by a series of cascades or rapids, which are perfectly useless for purposes of commerce. Without a railway, all of the Congo *hinterland* is not worth a *sou* if Belgium were to close its line; and the Power holding the railway unites the whole of Central Africa under its control. Everything is dominated by the economic bottle-neck of Stanley Pool, for there is no alternative outlet at present. The French therefore concentrated on securing a railway of their own and thus obtaining economic independence, for they realized that, without this, they would be the economic thralls of Belgium. With a characteristic Congolese nonchalance, they have spent four million francs on ten railway missions in the last forty years, the only result being to demonstrate time and again that such a coastal railway was within the bounds of possibility,—a fact that was quite obvious from the commencement. Finally, a convention of July, 1922, was made between the Government and a private Company, and the work started.<sup>48</sup>

As a result, public works in the Congo are still limited to this embryonic railway project and a few roads. There is no port worthy of the name, and travel in the interior is exactly as it was forty years ago. It is little wonder that, with a colony so neglected and so badly provided

<sup>47</sup> For the loans, see *Journal Officiel*, Deps., docts. parl., 1908, p. 364; 1909, Nos. 2212, 2268; *L'Afrique Française*, 1920, p. 291.

<sup>48</sup> For the various railway schemes, see Rouget, *L'Expansion Coloniale au Congo Française* (1906), p. 727 *et seq.*; Paulin (1924), *op. cit.*, pp. 64–68; *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1912, p. 392.

with public works, economic development has been at a standstill. The French have taken much, in ivory and rubber and the more accessible timber; and have given nothing in return, except diseases that accelerated the already acute decimation of the natives, and a few unhealthy posts, and telegraph lines. The Congo was clearly a tragedy for the people and a collapse from a developmental point of view; and the whole of the blame can by no means be attributed to the conditions, difficult though these admittedly were.

#### NATIVE POLICY AFTER THE COMPANIES

The second group of problems confronting the French concerned the natives. This problem was closely related to that of economic development. In such a climate, development was rigidly circumscribed by the native labour-supplies available, and, unfortunately for France, the natives were both few and poor. They were lower than any natives the French encountered elsewhere, even than the Melanesians of New Caledonia.

The Census-return gave a total of 4,950,000 natives in 1911 and 2,821,981 in 1921, and, though a more accurate method of taking the census would in part account for the diminution, there can be no doubt that the population declined, and is declining, at a rapid rate. Added to the ordinary causes of native depopulation was the influence of several factors local to the Congo,—the abuses of the Company-régime, the resultant weakening of the racial stock, sleeping-sickness, and a peculiarly aggravated form of abortion.<sup>49</sup> There is a decline practically everywhere, especially with the coastal tribes, the riverine dwellers of the Upper Ubangui, and the autochthones of the forest. The two former were harmed by portage-requirements and by coming into contact with the evil phases of Europeanization, and the latter because they are only a dust of degraded mankind, living for cannibalism. Especially ominous is the spread of sleeping-sickness, which has for some years been spreading north past the river-tribes and even to the healthier Islamized zone. Of 23,590 natives examined in the Chad region in 1918–1919, for instance, 3,566 died before the next year was out, and lesser instances were not lacking.<sup>50</sup> The war against this scourge started only in 1906, and, despite the gain in the northern provinces, it is now evident that the matter is largely a financial one. But, even could this specific disease be eradicated or restricted, the greater evil would remain,—the disintegration of the native life brought about by an unregulated contact with the worst phases of French civilization.

<sup>49</sup> Report by Gohr in *Institut Colonial International. Compte Rendu*, 1921, p. 507.

<sup>50</sup> Paulin (1924), *op. cit.*, pp. 39, 40.



The wider significance of this depopulation is that it leaves the French labour-supply far below the needs even of the present embryonic stage of development. Everywhere there is a shortage. Even in the palmy days of rubber-gathering, 25,000 natives were needed permanently, yet nothing like this number was forthcoming. The coastal tribes were dwindling in numbers and the inlanders would not work without compulsion. All went well until 1903, when there was not the slightest restriction, and the natives could virtually be enslaved; but after that, the adverse opinion of France on this matter forced the problem to the front. It was at once evident that labour, on a supply-and-demand basis, would not offer quickly enough. The natives would not enlist for service, except in the more vigorous Moslem *enclaves* in the far interior, the Sultanates of Ubangui and the Upper-Sangha lands, for instance. Elsewhere, it was only the increased contact with civilization, and the new needs and desires thus engendered, that could procure recruits, the more so because the memories of the period of abuse remained clearly etched in native minds. It was evident that economic development could not mark time until the coquetry of the women and the demand of the men for salt and alcohol would cause the trickle of labour-recruits to become a steady stream. "They have no conception of assiduous or organized work," reported an investigator in 1900, and would not labour unless compelled to, in some form or other.<sup>51</sup>

Yet direct force was out of the question after the tumult of 1905, and similar objections applied to the proposition of serfdom or paid slavery. Clémentel's experiment of free enlistment failed, and even the device that Galliéni had tried in Madagascar, indentures or long-term labour-contracts, was inapplicable for various reasons.

Development demanded men, yet the men would not offer. Accordingly, the only alternative to a complete *impasse* was in some form of indirect compulsion or stimulus to labour. Here entered the concept of "social taxation,"—that is, taxation so assessed as to bring about social or economic change. Such taxation was an inducement to change more than anything else; and, although the French aims were at first financial and aimed at securing an adequate labour-supply rather than the development of the natives themselves, the taxes in the Congo were somewhat of this nature. It is not clear how far this was the result of accident or design, although the connection between taxation and inducement to labour was soon noticed. A head-tax was imposed in 1902 and raised in 1907, and, at the time of its introduction, Decrais, the Minister of the Colonies, specifically said that it was "the only means we possess

<sup>51</sup> Second report of *L'Union Congolaise Française* (1909), p. 56; Rouget (1906), *op. cit.*, pp. 671, 672.

of gradually inducing the natives to work." But the Companies were made the collectors, and, after 1905, received payment in kind: and it was not until the reforms of 1906 that the earlier standpoint was again reverted to.<sup>52</sup> Even then, environmental difficulties came into play, and only about a fifth of the population paid, even in 1911. The plan for using a socially directed taxation as a means of making the natives work had thus dwindled. The French had hoped that the tax would make the natives work and that, once having seen how wages would gratify their desires and how contact with Europeans increased those desires, they would keep on working. But this hope was not realized. The natives afforded no adequate source of labour-supply, and France had to face this fact. All that she could do was to stand aside and, by a decree of May, 1922, sanction free contracts for periods of up to two years, and limit abuses. Either direct or indirect stimuli to work were out of the question.<sup>53</sup>

Naturally, they did not give up without a struggle. Faced by what seemed an inevitable stultification, they considered alternative labour-supplies from all over the world. As early as 1900, proposals were made to bring in Senegalese or Kroomen; and gradually carpenters and coopers filtered in from Sierra Leone and Accra, tinworkers from Cabinda, plantation foremen from San Thomé, and labourers from the Kroo coast. But these immigrants filled the fringe-employments instead of solving the main problem of securing labourers for the rubber and timber industries. Moreover, Senegalese proved very expensive and were taxed on leaving their own colony, because West Africa had its own labour problem.

There was then a turn to Asia. A Commissioner-General of the Congo Union, or syndicate of Companies, declared that Asiatics were absolutely necessary for the development of the Congo, and drew up a detailed scheme for their introduction (1907). This was approved both by the Congo Union and by Governor Gentil, but unfortunately the developmental loan, on which the prosecution of the scheme depended, was postponed, and so the plan was stillborn.<sup>54</sup> A Sangha Company tried Cuban blacks, but met with failure. This was accounted for by special reasons and not by any fault of the negroes, so that there was a further plan to consider negroes from Louisiana. A greater emphasis was placed on Indian immigration, either from India itself or from the descendants of Indian coolies in the over-populated Maurice Island. All of these remained mere schemes, but all the time the labour crisis was

<sup>52</sup> See Report of Bobochin Mission of Inquiry into Native Taxation, in *L'Afrique Française*, Feb. 1906, p. 50.

<sup>53</sup> Clémentel's instructions to Gentil, 11/2/06, in *Journal Officiel*, 14/2/06. Cp. Challaye (1909), *op. cit.*, pp. 220-225.

<sup>54</sup> Second report of *L'Union Congolaise Française* (1909), pp. 63-66.

becoming intensified. The emigration of Congolese to foreign colonies in Africa was forbidden, but even then no natives would enlist, except the coastal Loangos, the Mayumbés, and the inlanders from the Upper Ubangui sultanates. The colony staggered on from year to year with no outside labour, and no hope of any change for the better either in the immediate or the remote future. Three million natives, even if healthy and willing, would in no sense avail for the development of a region five times the size of France, and were practically useless when they were sick in body and recalcitrant in mind.

Recently, however, the position of the natives has slightly improved, largely owing to hygienic reforms. The removal of the old uncertainty of existence has caused the progressive Pahouins to prosper. The administration claims that the universal semi-starvation of past periods no longer pertains and that at least half a million of the natives are perfectly nourished (there are three million in all!). The old unhealthy huts are being abandoned for rectangular new ones, and the village natives are turning to agriculture. By 1923 there were fifty million *ceara*-rubber trees round the villages, and cultivation was rapidly extending.<sup>55</sup> The future of the Congo seems to depend on a development of small native-plantations, on the model of the cocoa-groves of the Gold Coast and the Cameroons and the increasing peasant-proprietorship of Nigeria and French West Africa. The lesson of the Gold Coast, in particular, proves that this materially helps the colony and the Treasury, as well as the natives themselves; and Kenya has even demonstrated that such native activity increases rather than diminishes the supply of labour available for European plantation. It is the habit of work that counts. Indeed, the idea of peasant-proprietorship has been one of the most striking phases of modern colonial theory, and experience has shown with the West Africans, and even with certain tribes of the New Hebrides and New Guinea, that it can be applied to tribes at various stages of civilization, and even to Melanesians, who would seem to vie with the Yakomas of the Congo for the blue-ribbon of savagery. This embryonic development, necessitated by the decline of the wild-rubber industry and the dawn of the age of varied and intensive cultures in the Congo, certainly spells hope for the Congolese, and, if the experience of other native colonies round the African bend counts for anything, a reasonable prosperity for the State.

A further hopeful tendency is seen in the changed French attitude towards native institutions since about 1906. Before then, on the customary French plan, the emphasis had been on destruction, and native institutions were viewed as something rudely to be thrust aside before

<sup>55</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Nov. 1923, p. 604.

exploitation could begin. This trend was accentuated by the horrors of the unreformed *régime* and by the demoralizing "colonial amnesia" or moral insanity produced by the Congo environment. But the destruction was too realistic, and it needed no great imagination to see where the decimated and hopeless tribes of 1905 were tending.

Therefore, France stayed her hand, and, from the time of the Congo Commission in 1906, emphasized rehabilitation rather than destruction.<sup>66</sup> It was clear that the natives had to be made progressive tribesmen under native conditions instead of deracialized plantation-fodder. The plantation-idea died hard, it is true, but the force of facts, especially the hold of sleeping-sickness and the intensity of depopulation, left no alternative. As a result, an attempt was made to restore the vigour and vitality of native life. It was believed that this would once more produce a hopeful psychology among the natives, instead of that listless and acquiescent fatalism which enhanced the grip of the diseases, both old and new, and reduced native resistance to zero. In other words, the aim was to revive the old native environment as far as possible and to allow the native to live in a world with which he was familiar and whose codes he could understand. The evil features of native organization had to be shorn as far as possible, it is true, and the requisite changes in material existence made; but, over and above that, the balance was to be left native. There was a good deal of the theory of segregation about the new policy.

Thus, Clémentel organized justice on native models in 1906, somewhat on the lines of the compromise of West Africa and Madagascar. That is, the lesser courts were to be under native law, and the higher ones had to take into account custom and equity, with a minimum of formality and an emphasis on native codes at all stages. Local customs and traditions, if they did not openly conflict with the bases of French civilization, were to remain. The French part was simply to eradicate the remains of savagery and keep order. As Clémentel's instructions to Gentil read in 1906, "the principle of the separation of powers is unintelligible to them, and what they demand from authority is that it shall be strong and just. In the interests of our dominion, as well as those of the natives themselves, therefore, we must consider the institution of native jurisdictions."<sup>67</sup>

With this arrangement for native justice (and it must be remembered that justice includes practically all the functions of government and social regulation in such communities) went a practical scheme of education.

<sup>66</sup> See statements of policy by Gentil and Merlin in *L'Afrique Française*, 1906, p. 229, and 1909, p. 140.

<sup>67</sup> Clémentel's speech in *Journal Officiel*, 22/2/06; Rouget (1906), *op. cit.*, pp. 545, 546.

Clémentel specifically said that "education should be primarily professional and technical,"—that is, proportioned to the actual needs of the natives. The faults of an inapplicable and useless literary education were thus avoided, largely because the missionaries who supervised native education had emphasized the vocational aspect. The Government scheme was organized on these lines in April, 1911, and provided for two degrees of primary instruction and vocational education. Unfortunately, the general stagnation of the colony directly limited these efforts, the result being that only 2,800 children were being educated in 1926.

Despite these shortcomings in practice, the goal in native affairs has been clearly defined, and the three aspects (peasant-proprietorship, maintenance of native institutions, and vocational education) all fit in together for the regeneration of native life. The contrast in objectives and methods from the period of Company-exploitation is striking. The hostage-camps and the organized decimation of the tribes have given way to a policy of moderate economic advance and a tolerance of native life. In its duality, this very much resembles that "mixture of very realistic methods and quasi-mystical apostolate" which were said to characterize de Brazza's policy in the early days of the colony. But, even so, depopulation and economic backwardness are still the predominant notes in native life, and the pessimistic psychology they engender is the greatest obstacle in the way of any reform.

Stagnation continues to dominate Congo affairs. Since 1914, the colony, losing its rubber industries and with its timber-exploitation fluctuating and precarious, has been limping along, with the aid of metropolitan subsidies, and going from bad to worse. It is the only one of the African possessions to be in such a plight. And French colonial psychology was such that, the worse its position became, the less disposed they were to come to its aid, and the less kindly did they feel towards it. The French temperament prospers in the Madagascars and Indo-Chinas, but not in the conditions of Equatorial Africa, with its dismal record of failure. Sarraut, therefore, in trying to get a credit for the colony in 1923, had to fight the Houses.<sup>58</sup> They cared little if the Congo had a deficit of eight million francs,—indeed, they seemed to cling to an idea that the larger the deficits the greater the possibility of the colony dying of mere attrition and thus passing off their hands! The joint effect of the war and the pre-existing policy—what Sarraut called "the detestable system of concessions"—had combined to ruin the Congo. A new note was struck, however, when Merlin, a skilled colonial governor, turned away from the enfeebled people and the inaccessibility

<sup>58</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Senate, 30/3/23.

of the country, and spoke of its infinite resources and the possibility of starting afresh there with a greater "natural capital" than any other French colony possesses at present.<sup>59</sup> Its 30,000 square miles of tropical forest, its agricultural belt, and the pastoral resources of the Chad colony, —all offer a more certain, if a slower, exploitation than the wild-rubber of former days; and, when the Pointe Novie railway, which was started in 1921, reaches Brazzaville, the isolation of the interior and the dependence of the colony on Belgian communications will largely be removed.

### THE LESSON OF THE CAMEROONS

This future is aided by the restoration of the territory ceded to Germany in 1911 and still more by the mandate over a portion of the ex-German Cameroons,—a region contiguous to the French Congo and which by 1922 had as much trade as all of the French colony. The acquisition of this new land was greatly desired by France, because it commands the communications with the western interior. "It is a rich though relatively sparsely peopled colony," reported the Fournieu Mission in 1918, "*and is the key of our West Africa.*"<sup>60</sup> It is essentially a rich agricultural country, more immediately a plantation-land than the Congo, and consequently better able to stand alone. It has a forest zone which merely prolongs the coastal belt of the French Congo, but, as in the main colony, this is now passed over as ruined by the competition of rubber produced on plantations. This gives way to a transition belt of savannahs and plateaux as in the southern colony,—a zone equally lacking in articles of export, but which opens on to the real heart of the country, the pastoral Adamaoua and the rich volcanic lands going up to Mount Cameroon. The conditions of the French Congo thus find themselves duplicated, but with the advantages more immediately realizable and at present dependent only on communications and the port of Douala.<sup>61</sup>

Equally as important as the optimistic trade note afforded by the Cameroons is the vigorous native policy in force. When the French went there in 1920, the slave-trade still flourished and the natives were as listless as the Congolese had been in 1905. Hausa and Moslem *col-porteurs* raided almost openly, and Foulbés destroyed entire villages. In the centre and east, certain groups had never been submitted to European influence and were restless to the point of civil war. In brief, conditions seemed to be a mixture between the Madagascar of 1895 and

<sup>59</sup> E.g. in introduction to Bruel (1918), *op. cit.*, pp. vi-vii.

<sup>60</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Jan.-Feb. 1919, pp. 9, 47.

<sup>61</sup> See report in *Journal Officiel*, 7/9/21, or article by Gaston-Joseph in *Colonies et Marine*, July-Aug. 1920, p. 454.

the Congo of 1905. The first French governor, Carde, changed all this, and introduced a series of reforms that showed how it was possible to transform the psychology and outlook of native races every bit as recalcitrant as the tribes France had to deal with in the Congo. By 1923 the last rebels had been subdued, native courts were themselves promulgating judgments against the slave-traders, and the wider question of the slave-states of the north had been attacked. Here, the problem, as in Madagascar and the Congo, was to institute "a policy of races,"—to raise certain tribes against the tyranny of their oppressors and to eradicate the innate psychology of submission. The Foulbés had set up states based on the slavery of the aborigines, much as the French Companies had done in the Congo, so that the two problems had a curious parallelism. The French scheme of 1920–1922 therefore aimed at organizing the indigenous natives, the Kirdis, against the invaders, and at inculcating ideas of independence by setting up a peasant proprietary.<sup>62</sup>

But this meant introducing the idea of private property, hitherto unknown with these races. Only the Bamiléké, because of the density of their population and the pressure of existence, had evolved a rudimentary property-system. The rest, as in the forest of the South-Camerouns, had no ownership. Carde's policy of changing slaves or serfs into peasant-proprietors naturally removes this. He has already eliminated slavery in the centre and the south, and reduced it in the north; and, even more suggestive for the future, he has familiarized many of the natives with the idea of personal property. The Boulous are quickly adopting it, because of the ownership of the new coconut-trees, and the Jaoundé have gone a step further in recognizing the idea of commercial property. Economic advancement is the best solvent of native communism and the most efficient agency in producing a changed psychology with the natives,—a psychology of hope and struggle and individualism.

The result is that the Camerouns are prospering and trade increasing, though it must be remembered that no small part of the credit is due to the mandate restrictions which provide for free trade. This means that Germany can take most of the exports and England most of the imports, so that the colony prospers, even if the French manufacturers do not. The Camerouns are thus trebly important. They are important in themselves as a flourishing colony: they are important as a natural adjunct giving a greater geographical unity to the French Congo: and they are important as an object-lesson to the French in their Congo lands. Carde has shown that France can succeed in solving a problem as grave as that of the Congo and under similar conditions. Indeed, if anything,

<sup>62</sup> Carde's first Report to the League of Nations on the Camerouns, 1923; *L'Afrique Française*, July, 1923, p. 327 *et seq.*

the conditions were worse, because while part of the Cameroons knew the serf-class of the Congo, the north had native-states frankly organized on a slave-basis, and these had virtually been eliminated from the Congo twenty years before. The problem in the Cameroons thus included both the past and present problems of the Congo. Yet it was solved by a joint use of Galliéni's method of the collaboration of races and the West African idea of transmuting native life through the economic progress of individual natives. At the same time, it showed that these results could be achieved without any large expenditure on communications and public-works, and with a buoyant trade-balance, even in the years of the world-crisis.

All of these trends were foils to the stagnation in the French Congo, and, as the conditions are racially and geographically similar, their pertinence to Congo evolution is beyond doubt. The events of Carde's rule in the Cameroons do much to dissipate the erroneous notions that the failure in the Congo was due either to the physical difficulties of the country or to the impossibility of France evolving a suitable policy there. Much of the Congo stagnation has been due to the idea that development is impossible without stupendous expenditures on public works, but, given the railway connecting Brazzaville with the coast, the Cameroons have shown that this is a misconception. Much, too, was caused by the lingering idea since the Toqué-Gaud *affaire*, that Frenchmen could not avail against the forest neurosis of the Equatorial lands, that this sapped their resilience and forbade an energetic policy, and that thus a *rapprochement* with the natives was out of the question. The Cameroons show that all of these firmly rooted ideas are due to an unjustified survival of the psychology of 1905, strengthened by the quite untrue reiterations of the "great-bush" school of novelists.

In a word, what Carde has shown in the Cameroons is that French policy in the Congo has been vitiated not by the Congo, not by inherent shortcomings of the French colonial officials, but by a general misconception of conditions and needs, and by an obsession on the part of Frenchmen at home. The root of the evil is thus psychological: the success of the Cameroons in so short a time and in the face of such grave obstacles is definite on this point, both as regards trade and native policy. It diagnoses the Congo disease for the first time and shows the imperative need of determining policy by the conditions of 1925, not by a lifeless and foregone pessimistic survival of the ideas of 1905. "The Cinderella of the French Empire," "the colonial Panama," "bush amnesia,"—all of these standpoints have strangled the Congo, especially when joined to a limitation of credits and thus a refusal even to give the land a chance to rehabilitate itself. The errors of the past are mani-

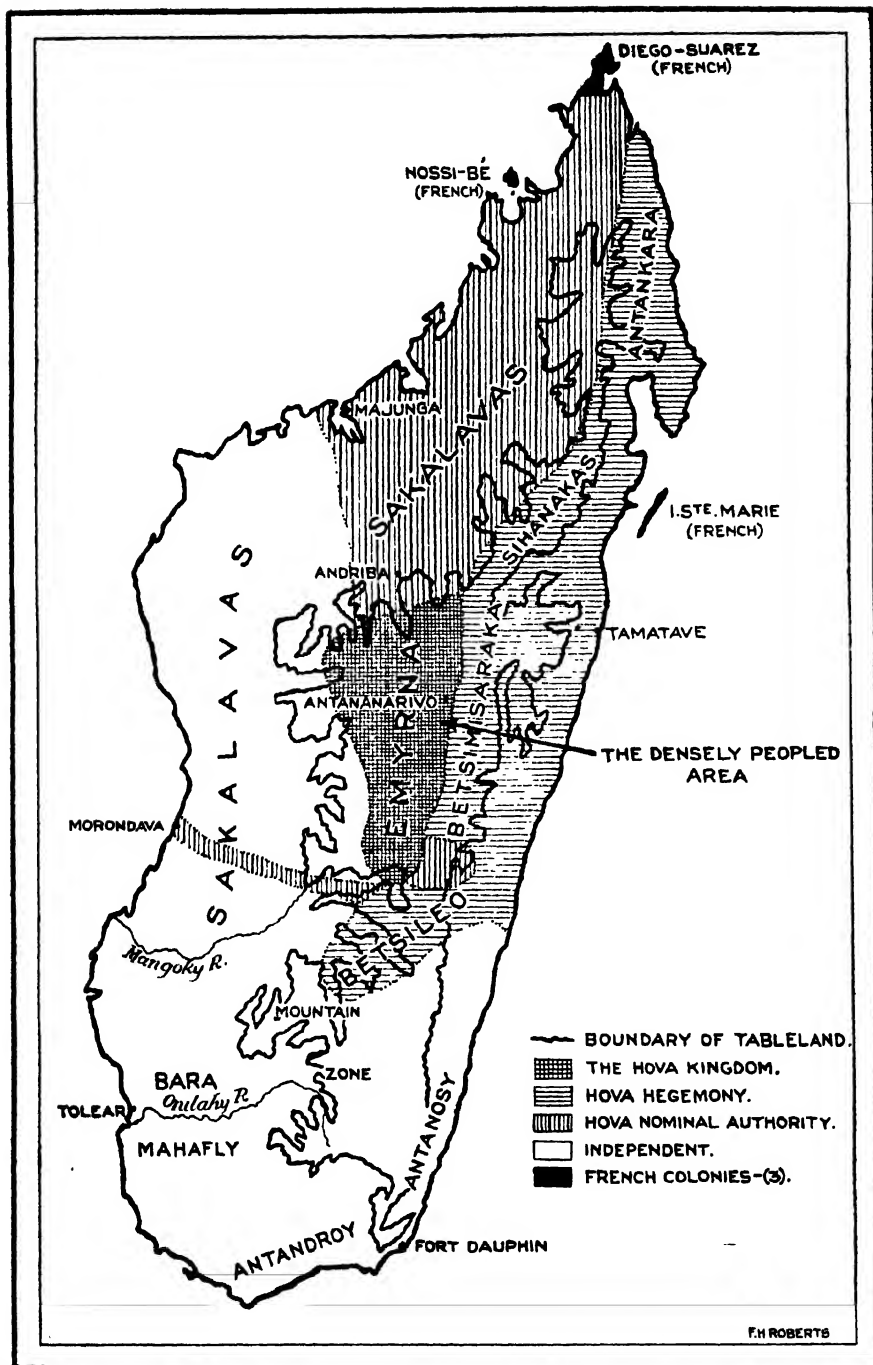


fest, but it is equally an error to let these past mistakes vitiate future policy ; and it is the negation of the colonizing spirit simply to step aside and say that there is some impassable gap between the undoubted riches of the Congo and French colonial methods. It is as dissipating these views and as showing the future development of the Congo in protoplasm that the Cameroons are so important. Sarraut's programme of public works and Carde's transformation of the Cameroons thus bid fair to open a vista of hope for French Equatorial Africa, and at least to remove the peculiarly pessimistic psychology regarding Congo affairs. France has sought to solve the Congo problem by ignoring it, or by letting it drift. Now, she is adapting the newer method of transplanting Carde's experience, justified as it is by success, further south : and this original determination is the greatest step of all.

## CHAPTER X

### MADAGASCAR

THE instance of Madagascar is especially instructive in the history of French colonization, because the French were dealing there with a very involved problem, and because the solution was astonishingly successful. Indeed, from the first, Madagascar vied with West Africa in being the most successful colonial venture of France, and, although the island has known nothing of the striking economic advance of Indo-China in recent years, it still remains in the forefront of French colonial annals, especially as concerns the natives. It would be difficult to imagine a native problem more acute and complicated than that of Madagascar in 1895, and equally difficult to envisage a more satisfactory solution. That is what makes Madagascar so important in the history of comparative colonization,—that France introduced there a model state of native policy at least twenty years before such ideas were freely accepted elsewhere. A native policy based on *association*—a “policy of races,” as Galliéni called it—was introduced almost at once; and to France is due much of the credit for working out this phase of indirect rule (even before England’s experiments in Nigeria), and in particular for perfecting those means which are now being emphasized as perhaps the leading props in any system of indirect rule,—viz., development on native lines, a “social taxation” for purposes of native improvement, and vocational education, both agricultural and industrial. Madagascar was thus a laboratory of research in native policy, the lesson being the more striking because it was so opposed to the conventional French theory of rule. It was this that made France successful in Madagascar and that has given the island an importance for the whole French Empire. For instance, the policy adopted in Morocco at a later date was clearly a derivative of that pursued a decade earlier in Madagascar, and the present general theory of “association” found its practical arguments there too. The island was thus, like Algeria, an experimental-station in policy: unlike its Mediterranean prototype, however, it was successful from the beginning, and has played a greater part in directly moulding France’s present native policy than any other French possession, perhaps even more than Tunisia.



MADAGASCAR BEFORE THE FRENCH.

### I. Events leading to the Conquest

The position before the French conquest was singularly confused. On the central plateau, and largely inaccessible from all sides, was the kingdom of Emyrna or Merina, commonly but quite incorrectly called the Hova Kingdom. These so-called Hovas were Pacific Islanders slung thousands of miles from their proper habitat: at base, they are really Polynesians, diverted in this direction when their fellows in the great age of voyages 2,000 years ago left Malaya for the Pacific. The passing of the centuries involved much Melanesian and later African mixture, but the Hova blood and language and organization remained essentially Polynesian. These olive-coloured *métis* existed in their present form from the fifteenth century and easily exerted a dominance over the surrounding black tribes.

They retained the customary Polynesian organization, but in an accentuated form, because for centuries they were so isolated from outside influences. Accordingly, their social policy was one based on absolute kings and a feudal structure rigidly graduated from nobles to slaves. It was an essentially caste-organization, a curious feature being the absence of private property: the King was the only Malagasy land-owner, an ethnological fact that was most important when the French conquered the land. Gradually these Emyrna or Merina, of whom the Hovas properly speaking were only the second or *bourgeois* caste, merged their many kingdoms into one organization centring round Antananarivo, and, both because of their superior organizing ability and their impregnable position on the key-plateau of the island, spread their hegemony over most of the east. This expansion was accomplished in the eighty years before 1810, so that, when the French came, sufficient time had elapsed for a definite tradition of Hova leadership to grow up,—a fact which the French seized as the basis of their organization.<sup>1</sup>

But the impassable nature of the country and the intrinsic weakness of the Hovas made a complete amalgamation of the island out of the question, especially in the inhospitable west and south. It was only in the east coast, where the gentle and idle Betsimisaraka dwelt, that Hova rule extended in detail: even the northern Sakalavas, "the men of the long valleys," consented only to a nominal Hova control and resisted any attempt to convert that control into a reality, for instance, by becoming French allies. In the west and south, the poorer and more mountainous parts of the country, where only a *transhumant* pasture was possible, the country was not worth Hova efforts, nor could

<sup>1</sup> A. and G. Grandidier, *Ethnographie de Madagascar*, 4 vols., 1901-1918; or, for short account, E. F. Gautier, *Madagascar* (1902), p. 335 *et seq.*

they have gone there had they wanted to. As the French found, the most recalcitrant natives of the land were there, hardened by a difficult environment something like that of South Algeria or the Boer steppes,—a land of dour natives and perpetual tribal wars. The Sakalavas, in the west proper, were idle warriors, but lacked stamina and, decimated by disease, were rapidly giving way. Beyond them, as one went south to the almost impenetrable strongholds of the Bara pillagers, a more primitive type of savagery became manifest: the westerners and southerners in the main were thus essentially unproductive brigands, knowing nothing of Hova rule, either actually or in name.<sup>2</sup>

In all, about a third of the land was under the Hovas, but it must be noted that this was the temperate region, the economic nerve-centre of the whole: they monopolized the economically desirable part, for, contrary to general opinions, Madagascar is not a land of teeming natives and luxurious tropical vegetation,—a magnified Ceylon. To the contrary, save for the central Hova plateau, it is a poor and scantily populated land, and, in the south at least, is positively forbidding. The Hova control, therefore, was more important than its area indicated, and explained why Madagascar, to all intents and purposes, meant Emyrna,—the Hova Kingdom.

For the rest, the so-called kingdom was a savage one, more reminiscent of the *opéra-bouffe* kingdoms of the Pacific than anything else. It was essentially barbaric, so much so that the quasi-modernization of the nineteenth century, by emphasizing the ludicrousness of the innovations, only served to throw the basic savagery into clearer relief. The introduction of the *bric-à-brac* of the civilization of Louis Philippe and Napoleon III (or rather of Victorian drawing-rooms, because it was England who brought the new atrocities to Madagascar!) could not remove the blood-base; and Madagascar was simply a larger Fiji, a lesser Morocco. As Prince Henry of Orleans summed up the position, the Hova kingdom resolved itself into

“a Government which exists only in name and which in reality is only a union of a few families come together to exploit the greatest number,—barbarous princes still capable of human sacrifices and of horrors which it is impossible to describe,—a Queen recognized mistress of an island of which she possesses scarcely half—a people working only enough to live, and certain that to save money is a way to be despoiled,—an administration sold by auction and paying itself from the administered,—and everywhere arbitrariness, anarchy, and, in their train, insecurity.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Annuaire Général de Madagascar*, 1920-1921, Vol. II, p. 9 et seq. See Map No. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Henri d'Orleans, *A Madagascar* (1895), p. 77; Malzac, *Histoire du Royaume Hova depuis ses origines jusqu'à sa fin* (1912).

It was with this body, crumbling beneath the insurrections of the semi-subdued subject-races and the disintegration brought about by inconsiderate changes in a policy based on custom, that the French had to deal,—or rather, this body plus the English missionaries and the English mercenaries who, in the intervals between the Zulu wars, found a happy hunting-ground (and less arduous fighting) in the adjacent island.

Madagascar had been linked with French claims for a long time, in the same vague way as the Senegal or the Congo coast. France had claims that were partly legendary, partly historical, and in any case, of little practical importance, unless supported by force,—claims that might serve as the tinsel draperies to hide the mouth of the guns, but which would deceive no sensible person. Louis XIII had taken official possession of Madagascar: Richelieu had given it to the "*Compagnie d'Orient*": a Hungarian adventurer had set up a French kingdom in all of the north, and his success was supposed to be dear to Louis XVI, until he sold out to the Americans: and Napoleon sent two missions there. On this flimsy basis, France erected the structure of her claims over the island. Even the oldest of them was deemed to have been retained; and if, in the aggregate, their array was nothing formidable, they were given a fresh importance in the newer alignment of forces of the nineteenth century. They were rejuvenated, so to speak, and given an importance which their originators would scarcely have conceived.

Nothing could be done, however, until France knew something of this prize that was waiting for the taking. Accordingly, attempts were made to penetrate the interior,—a slow task, because until 1860 there were only a few coastal settlements, mostly on the east. It was Alfred Grandidier (1865–1870) who first made known the island, by his successive explorations of the south and west and then of the central plateau,—the Hova land proper. By this time, the Hovas, who, as has been said, had all of the political sagacity of the Polynesian races, could see the trend of events and had become inveterate enemies of the French. The forces were clearly arrayed: it was the Hovas and the English missionaries, aligned against the on-coming French. Under Queen Ranavalona the Cruel, "the female Caligula" (1828 onwards), this policy was definitely shaped, and the Malagasian kingdom threw down its gages. A decree of 1845 submitted all foreigners to local law,—a euphemistic way of making them subject to intolerable *corvées*, slavery for debt, and confinement to the Hova province. A punitive expedition failed, and, since France was not fundamentally concerned with colonial expansion at this time, the country was locked up until the eighties, the withdrawal of the troops seeming to testify to the intrinsic power of the

Hovas and accordingly strengthening them in their definitely recalcitrant attitude.<sup>4</sup>

But this recalcitrance overreached itself, for the Hovas did not realize that their immunity from interference was only one of convenience, to be tolerated as long as they did nothing sufficiently aggravating to prevail against the dominant anti-colonialism in France. After 1881, therefore, when they committed the *faux pas* of going too far, events quickly moved to the protectorate of 1885. In March, 1881, a code was promulgated in Madagascar, and said in the famous "Law 85" that no foreigner was to own land in the country. This at once gave France a *casus belli*, for a treaty of 1868 had definitely conceded this right to Frenchmen. The aim was undoubted: the native rulers were openly embarking on an anti-French course.

As Consul Baudais reported at the close of 1881, "the Hovas have been slowly but cautiously pursuing the same end for several years,—the expulsion of every Frenchman from the country."<sup>5</sup> Having attacked French private interests, they now turned to the State and denied the French protectorate which had been formed some years previously over the north-western tribes. These were the two outstanding grievances of France: to them was soon added an insensate *furor* against the *vazahas* or Frenchmen, gaining intensity as only an emotional tumult in an Oriental country can. It became unsafe for Frenchmen, and in 1883 the coasts were bombarded in various places and the French occupied Majunga and Tamatave.<sup>6</sup> At this juncture, however, they were check-mated, and, hampered by the desultory policies of Paris and their own weakness and the fever of Madagascar, they stood still for a couple of years. They could do no more than hold the two coastal posts and maintain a nominal blockade over the north-west. And all the time the frenzy of the Malagasians was increasing against them. Even the school-children were mobilized, and the new Queen, Ranavalona III, cried that she "would not give them the smallest corner of land, not even as much as would cover a grain of rice!"

Meanwhile, in Paris, there had been the usual vacillations. The Ministry knew that the existing position was untenable and that they would either have to occupy the land or withdraw, but, liking neither of these alternatives, tried to stand still,—an impossible policy when the Hovas were mustering forces strong enough to push the fevered French garrisons into the sea and when the English Cabinet, through Lord Lyons, was supporting their attitude and hindering the French

<sup>4</sup> Livre Jaune, *Affaires du Madagascar*. 1881-1883, p. 4

<sup>5</sup> Baudais-Gambetta, 13/12/81, in *Affaires du Madagascar*, 1881-1883, p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> *Affaires du Madagascar*, 1882-1883 (1884), p. 7 *et seq.*

at every step. Ferry, as usual, was somewhat hazy and indistinct on the matter. He stopped short of conquest, saying that he was there only for the protection of the French allies, the Sakalavas, and to uphold French nationals and French secular rights; but he would not link up force with the assertion of these rights, save as a remote and unpalatable contingency. Ironically enough, the Right and the extreme Left, the notorious anti-colonials, attacked him for not being sufficiently energetic in asserting France's rights, although obviously they were concerned more with attacking Ferry than supporting a forward policy in Madagascar in itself. The sequence of events was altogether remarkable. With Ferry in power and hesitant about provocative action in Madagascar, the Deputies declared for force by 437 to 26 votes (July, 1884):<sup>7</sup> with Ferry out of power, the same Deputies a few weeks later vigorously attacked the Malagasian venture, and Ferry as vigorously defended it, literally fighting through the credits as a forlorn hope, as he had done in the case of Tunisia and Tonkin (July, 1885).<sup>8</sup> This curious juxtaposition obviously justifies a conclusion anent the relative importance of party-quarrels in Paris and the intrinsic issues of Madagascar, and explains why the Hovas were given time to form an army, under English instructors.

In the interim, despite the bombardment and the occupation of the north-west, the Malagasian position had been strengthened, because the discussion in the Deputies had made it clear that the French simply wanted a protectorate over the north-west and were not concerned with the Hova control of Antananarivo. Moreover, the invaders were realizing for their part that the task was more difficult than they had anticipated, so that, hampered by desertions and the ever-present fever, they eagerly adopted the compromise suggested by their consul Baudais,<sup>9</sup>—to recognize the Hova Queen as ruler of the whole land in return for a nominal French protectorate, also over the whole. This would save the face of both parties, and, since it changed the actual position of neither, was acceptable to both. It solved an awkward dilemma by ignoring it and by introducing paper schemes which had no relation to actuality, and thus hurt nobody. Accordingly, the treaty of December 17, 1885,<sup>10</sup> instituted both a French protectorate and an all-Madagascar Queen, both of them purely nominal. France agreed not to interfere in internal matters, but, as a *quid pro quo*, received the control of foreign affairs, the entire

<sup>7</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Depts., 28/3/84, 22/7/84, 31/7/84; Senate, 15/8/84. See de Lanessan's report in *Journal Officiel*, Depts., 8/7/84.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Depts., 22-29/7/85 (long debates), especially Ferry in 29/7/85.

<sup>9</sup> In *Livre Jaune, Affaires du Madagascar*, 1884-1886 (1886), pp. 119, 131,—Baudais-Ferry, 25/10/84 and 25/6/85.

<sup>10</sup> In *Livre Jaune, Affaires du Madagascar*, 1884-1886 (1886), p. 174.



cession of Diégo-Suarez (the seat of the north-western operations), and an indemnity. This was clearly a temporary compromise, however, and solved nothing. On the other hand, it gave both sides a breathing-space, and, in particular, time for the colonials in France to rally,—a much-needed move since the last Malagasian credit had been voted in the Deputies only by a majority of four,<sup>11</sup> and since Ferry's fall had implied a ban on colonial ventures. Madagascar thus comes very closely in the wake of Tonkin and Tunisia in the list of colonial experiments in which French action was hindered by the anti-colonial monomania of the mother-country: indeed, it is the unjustified Imperialism and the ridiculously inefficient methods of enforcing it that characterize the whole of these ventures of the Third Republic.

For this breathing-space France had to pay dearly in the years of thwarted effort, when the position became increasingly impossible. The Hovas construed the treaty of 1885 as a victory, and, with the impulsive tactlessness of unsophisticated native rulers, were not content to let well alone. Consequently, the next decade was "one long chafing" for the French. Individual Frenchmen were assassinated and the blame laid on "*Favahalos*" or brigands,—a procedure that grew on itself, as the operation was a pleasure and the attribution of blame a royal jest. More important, there was continual trouble with the subject-tribes, especially in the uncontrolled south and west. The Hova kingdom was quickly crumbling and had to rely on Betsileo conscripts, led to the front chained two by two: and the entire island was soon in a ferment.

Faced with this drift, France clearly had to move one way or the other. "We must sooner or later go to Antananarivo," Baudais reported in 1884 and on several later occasions<sup>12</sup>: a coastal policy was absurd, as it did not touch the fringe of the problem, for "the plateau of Imerina is Madagascar, and so long as the Hovas are there, they are the masters of the island." This was the goal: the existing position was at its last breath, because the treaty of 1885 had been broken in all its branches. It had not given France a protectorate but a right of protection,—quite a different thing: it had not defined the rights of each Power: it had not mentioned the vital matters of land-ownership and economic exploitation, and it was full of equivocations. Indeed, for all practical purposes it did not exist, as there was a difference between the Hova and French texts, and neither side would recognize the validity of the

<sup>11</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 25/7/85. Compare dwindling majorities in *Journal Officiel*, Senate, 15/8/84 and 28/12/85, dissentients increasing from 1 to 59. See especially Clemenceau's attacks in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 31/7/85.

<sup>12</sup> Baudais-Ferry, 9/5/84, in *Affaires du Madagascar, 1884-1886*, p. 104.

other's translation. France always had a Grand-Guignol element in her colonial efforts, and nowhere was this more evident than in the Madagascar of 1890,—quarrelling over the verbiage of a treaty with a native government that had practically no existence. As a sign of the breakdown of the compromise, Le Myre de Vilers, the first Resident at Antananarivo (1886–1889), had withdrawn, although, an experienced soldier and administrator, he should have been able to stop there had anyone at all been able to do so, because his collaboration with Chanzy in Algeria and his reforms in Indo-China had elevated him to the front rank of French colonials, and he possessed the useful qualities of humour and *sang-froid* not always known to his fellows in that front rank. But even such a tactful negotiator as M. de Vilers could not avail against the machinations of the English and the limitations of his position, and he withdrew in 1889,<sup>13</sup>—the deciding step. From that moment, intervention was only a matter of time, depending on two factors,—the recognition of the French protectorate by England (achieved in 1890), and the winning-over of the French Parliament, which was not a difficult matter now that the anti-colonialism of the eighties had faded into the period of military expansion.

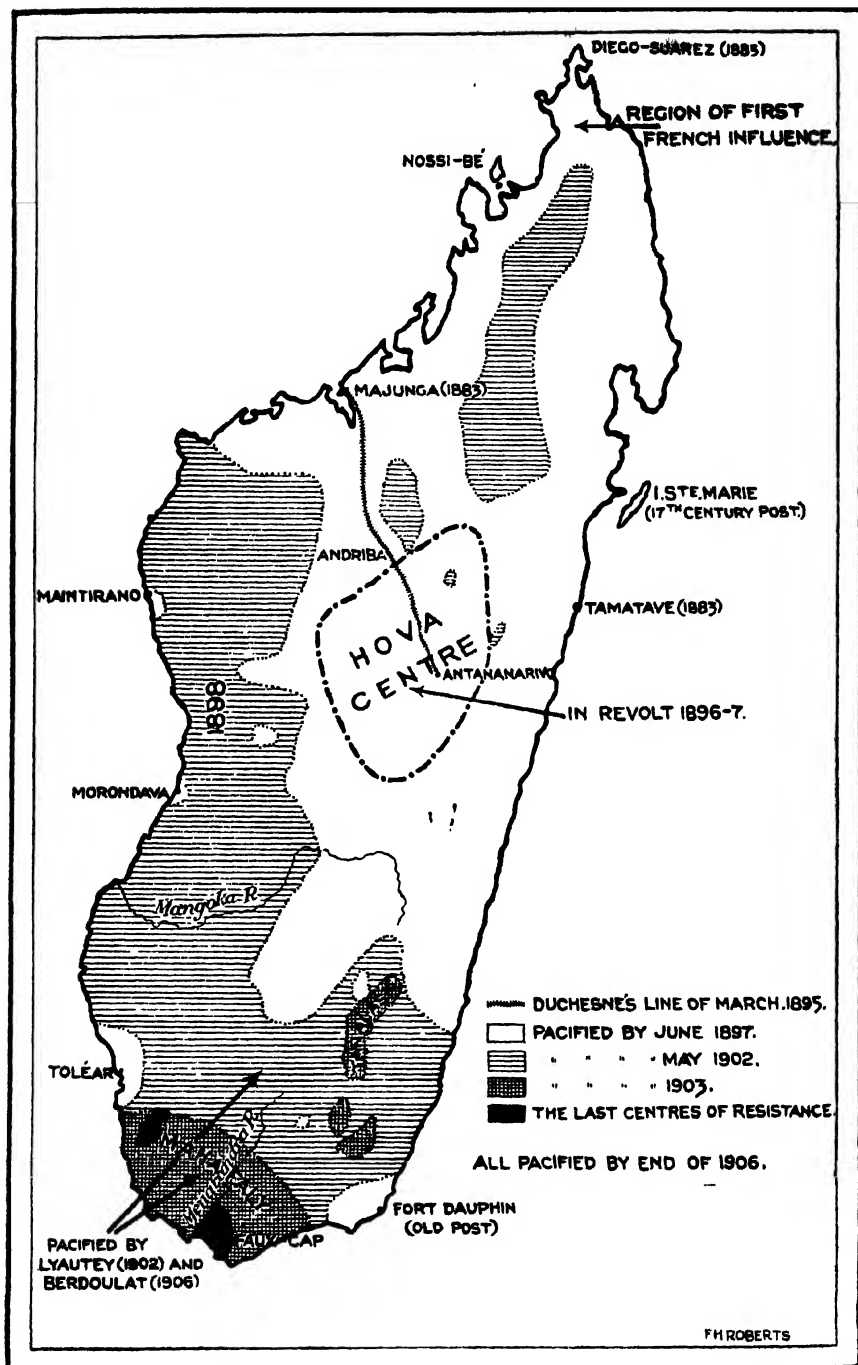
Gabriel Hanotaux, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, strongly appealed to the Deputies in November, 1894, for a solution of the *impasse*, and, urging both the collapse of the compromise of 1885 and the French need of the plantations and metals of Madagascar, demanded “a protectorate with all its consequences.”<sup>14</sup> He thus provided a rallying slogan, and added a new element,—the economic *motif*. “The Hova Government has constantly made the work of colonization impossible,” he told the Senate<sup>15</sup>; and now the idea was not only to avenge the insults to France but to develop the land. Le Myre de Vilers, sent out again as a special plenipotentiary, reported that Hova excitement was so great as to admit only of forceful methods. The position he found was impossible. “To the calculated delays of a dictator were added the weaknesses of a divided oligarchy, which was more concerned with internal quarrels than the destiny of the country. Under these conditions,” he summed up, “the negotiations threatened to become eternal, as no one dared to take the least responsibility.”<sup>16</sup> The French therefore left the capital: the English officers rallied the Hovas, as in 1885: the red flag, the signal of

<sup>13</sup> G. Grandidier, *Le Myre de Vilers, Duchesne, Gallieni: Quarante Années de l'histoire de Madagascar* (1923), p. 29 *et seq.*

<sup>14</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 16/11/94, 24/11/94, or G. Hanotaux, *L'Affaire de Madagascar* (1896), 3rd edition, pp. 84, 147 *et seq.*

<sup>15</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Senate, 7/12/94. Compare Deputies, 23/1/94 (Brunet).

<sup>16</sup> Le Myre de Vilers-Hanotaux, 4/11/94, in Hanotaux (1896), *op. cit.*, p. 71.



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muster, was hoisted on the twelve sacred mountains: and it was war. The degree of Hova disintegration, however, was at once made evident by the collapse of their resistance; and little over four months after the French commander, Duchesne, landed, he was in Antananarivo, his chief enemies being the awkward *terrain* and the difficulties of food and communications. Only twenty of a total of 5,592 men were killed by the enemy: disease took the rest,—a significant commentary both on the way in which French abstention had conjured up a non-existent bogey in Madagascar, and on the manner in which colonial wars were conducted in this period of military expansion.<sup>17</sup>

In October, 1895, therefore, Ranavalona III accepted a real French protectorate, as distinct from the shadowy structure of 1885, and, in return, the French agreed to recognize Hova authority everywhere, thus clinging tenaciously to this *idée fixe* of native policy in Madagascar,—an idea which, based on a misconception, for long paralysed all efforts there. This, it will be remembered, was the idea evolved by Consul Baudais in 1885,<sup>18</sup> and was supported by the over-large emphasis which the French always placed on the Hovas. They made the Hova kingdom and Madagascar synonymous conceptions, and, if the two did not coincide, the scores of outside kingdoms were viewed only as rebels who had seized the opportunity of the existing troubles to deny their allegiance. The French interpreted Madagascar in terms of their own centralized polity, whereas in reality the land was essentially one of local units, both by geography and race, and, as such, could the easier have been controlled by a strong outside Power.

But, instead of seizing this obvious solution of "rule by division," France decided not only for the maintenance, but even for an extension, of Hova rule, thus introducing a completely artificial conception, and, moreover, one which would be resisted to the utmost by the independent native kingdoms. France was at once attacking their independence and reviving their anti-Hova feeling. In short, the French had solved the Malagasian problem by arguing from premises which did not exist, and thus, as in their early days in Indo-China, encountered only difficulties. "Let us make her (the Hova Queen) a Queen of Madagascar and a Queen in all seriousness," urged Baudais in 1885, "uniting under her power the fifteen or twenty peoples of Madagascar, and reigning at Antananarivo (the importance and situation of which indicate it as the natural capital

<sup>17</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 27/1/94, for decision: 23-27/11/94 for debates: 9/12/94 for credits. The best secondary account is in Grandidier (1923), *op. cit.*, p. 62 *et seq.*, and for the operations, Chap. 4, or J. E. Duchesne, *Rapport sur l'Expédition de Madagascar* (1897).

<sup>18</sup> *Livre Jaune, Affaires du Madagascar*, 1884-1886, p. 119.

of the island), but reigning under our direction and according to our advice." There was something glamorously imperial about this Queen-making process that appealed to the Frenchmen of the nineties, and, accordingly, the buttressing of Hova hegemony and the extension of that hegemony over the whole of the other island-races became the key-notes of French policy after the conquest of 1895, and until Galliéni went out. Naturally, since this policy was based on a complete misconception, it was not until Galliéni destroyed the Hova hegemony and utilized natives of *all* tribes that there was any success. French policy in the early days meant a Hova policy, whereas Galliéni's "policy of races," by stressing the numerous tribal units and by affording scope to all, alone met the situation.

But in 1895, as in 1885, policy was determined less by the facts of the particular problem which confronted France than by considerations of general theory in Paris. At this time, after the success of M. Cambon in Tunisia and the turmoils of Indo-China, the general question of colonial control was being discussed, especially the protectorate policy. Under these conditions, the concrete Malagasian issue was swept into the discussion of general theory, and the actual policy decided, not by the facts of the situation, but by the fluctuating opinions which were shaping general French colonial policy at this time when the new Empire, that conquered in Indo-China and Africa, was demanding organization. In this way, Madagascar became a kind of touchstone of colonial policy,—a determinant of policy in the stage after the positive success of Tonkin and the negative lessons of Indo-China. The position seemed to be that protectorates had succeeded and that the older idea of "annexation-plus-assimilation" had failed: at least, there was a tendency to generalize from the lessons of Tunisia and Indo-China, and it was on Madagascar that the percussions of these theoretical generalizations fell.

There were three main schools of opinion on the matter. First were the annexationists, who looked on assimilation as the keynote of French colonialism and who were inclined to explain away the notorious failure in Cochin-China by reawakening the old hostility towards the whole of the Indo-Chinese peninsula and saying that *any* policy would fail there! These found support from the military school, who believed in a charmingly succinct doctrine of force and destruction, and who pointed to the recent advances in South Algeria and the Niger and Tonkin as indisputable proofs of their contentions. At the opposite extreme was the newer idea of "protectorate," basing its claims on Cambon's rule in Tunisia and the ideas of Paul Bert and de Lanessan in Tonkin. This was the fashionable theory of the day with the non-military sections,

and it must be remembered that M. Etienne and the industrialists were perhaps the leading forces in colonial theory at this juncture. These theorists found a spokesman in Gabriel Hanotaux, the Minister of Foreign Affairs ;<sup>19</sup> and were supported by the Algerian reformers who were taking such a firm stand against *rattachements* and assimilation in general.

Elasticity and variation according to local needs and conditions were the demands of the protectorate-school, or, as Hanotaux said, "a supple and elastic organization capable of adapting itself to whatever difficulties may arise,—an organization which, while being prompt and energetic and *bon enfant*, would not be cumbersome or formal." He wanted an essentially resilient policy, taking into account the rudimentary organization of the Malagasians, and, while allowing as much development as might be warranted or demanded by the new conditions, pressing very lightly, almost imperceptibly, on the natives. This implied a rejection of all the minute details of French organization and all the paraphernalia of assimilation, and a corresponding regard for native institutions. The determining fact of the situation was to be the needs of the native : those institutions that had evolved must be to some extent based on native needs and conditions, it was argued, and, assuming that the anti-developmental aspects could be shorn away, should be the best basis for future organization. Duchesne's instructions, conceived in this light, had read, "it would be unwise to break their manners and interests and prejudices unnecessarily,"<sup>20</sup> and he was urged to conserve their organization as far as possible,—a direct contrast to the policy which the French were even then pursuing in West Africa and the Pacific of first shattering everything native, and only then considering the needs of the future. That was the argument of the new school,—assimilation was not proportioned to the needs of the occasion, and, moreover, had broken down in those colonies in which it had been adopted : on the other hand, in Tunisia, where native institutions and customs, even the illogical and needless ones, had been kept, there was obvious success. Could the deduction be clearer ?

But the position was not so simple. The protectorate-school had reacted in the opposite direction from the assimilators, and had gone from emphasizing French ideas to native ideas : but a third or intermediate school arose and wanted to know how the ideal of protectorate, however desirable it might be, could be immediately translated into practice under the specific conditions pertaining at that moment in Madagascar ? How, in a word, could the fine theory of protectorate be brought down to the hard earth of everyday fact ? Assimilation was

<sup>19</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 24/11/94.

<sup>20</sup> In Hanotaux (1896), *op. cit.*, pp. iii, xvi-xix.

obviously faulty—that nobody denied,—but it at least worked, even if not in the most satisfactory manner. But how far was this new theory of a protectorate only a theoretical reaction, incapable of realization in actual practice, save in the peculiar conditions of Tunisia where there was an old-established kingdom and, moreover, one cemented by a strong religious factor?

As soon as the protectorate was established in Madagascar, this compromising school pressed to the front, and attacked the treaty of October, 1895, as being based on an unworkable theory. Leroy-Beaulieu and Le Myre de Vilers led this attack and argued for a midway system which was neither protectorate nor annexation, but which was used by England, Holland, and Russia in their lands, especially by the English in Kashmir. This combined the maximum utilization of native chiefs with the most effective control, and allowed both an economy of effort and a consciously directed evolution. Leroy-Beaulieu reached this position by a process of elimination. Direct administration by Frenchmen, with its corollary of assimilation, was clearly uncalled for. "We have no desire to govern by prefects and sub-prefects," with all of the centralization and unification that this implied. On the other hand, a protectorate policy was negative, and, under the conditions of Madagascar, meant a virtual abdication of French sovereignty. "The protectorate pure and simple would be deplorable, an unpardonable *naïveté*, as our soldiers would then mount guard in Madagascar only for the protection of British influence and interests." The effective system, therefore, would be one which would amount to annexation in so far as foreign Powers were concerned (with a corresponding power over foreign nationals—an important matter in Madagascar), yet which would be a protectorate from the point of view of internal government,—but with the French hand clearly in evidence.<sup>21</sup> France was not in the mood for a repetition of the disastrous experiment of 1885 and demanded a clear control, even if in an indirect manner. That is, there was to be an approach from an annexationist point of view, but with a more elastic system, and one more in touch with native interests than that usually employed by the French.

Whatever the merits of this midway theory *per se* (and it seemed almost as intangible as the theory of protectorate pure and simple), it at least swung the pendulum in favour of annexation and ranged the majority of theorists in the camp opposed to the idea of a protectorate. To the nebulous characteristics of a "protectorate" policy and the difficulty of immediately translating it into a practical code, was added the deep-seated desire of the Frenchmen for direct measures,—in a word,

<sup>21</sup> *L'Economiste Français*, 24/8/95, 19/10/95.

for the old assimilative substratum. And already in 1896, the treaty, although it had stipulated for "the protectorate of France with all its consequences," was bitterly attacked, because it seemed to stop half-way and to be not even the midway theory elaborated by *L'Economiste Français*, but an abnegation of French rights. The difficulties and length of the conquest (which had but begun and not been ended by the spectacular march on the plateau and capital) had astonished and disgruntled France, so that, "under these conditions, the terms of the treaty of 1895 appeared disproportionate to the importance of the sacrifices that had been involved."<sup>22</sup>

Opinion was fast tending towards a more complete and immediate form of control, and the Tunisian system, in so far as it was to be applied to Madagascar, was throttled at birth. This change was aided once more by the emergence of the anti-colonials, who, in the particularly exasperated frame of mind in which they found themselves during the numerous colonial wars of 1894-1895, resolved that, if France had to have this new colony, at least she should have it completely,—a policy of grasping the nettle. Even before the war was over, the Government, in pursuance of this trend, had telegraphed to Duchesne to *impose* the protectorate by a unilateral act and not to negotiate it by a mutual treaty; but they were too late, the result being that, after the ventilation of this matter in public, the Treaty of Antananarivo was replaced by a unilateral Act of the French Parliament, and then by an Act of August, 1896, which, after a long *exposé des motifs*, said in a single clause that Madagascar was directly annexed to France. The protectorate-idea was thus rejected, and colonial theory seemed to have swung back to the pre-Tunisian stage of annexation and assimilation.<sup>23</sup> The only result of the lengthy discussions was to confer an unjustified *imprimatur* on the old methods and correspondingly to retard the effective organization of the new Empire which was just then being conquered, and in particular, to establish anomalous positions in Madagascar and Indo-China, the two colonies most immediately affected by the decision.

To be logical, the triumph of the annexationist school in Madagascar, based as it was on the fall of the idea of a protectorate, should have been accompanied by those methods usually associated with annexation: but the trouble was that, if the French could set back the clock of theory, they could not mould the existing facts in an equally facile

<sup>22</sup> Analysis in E. Mignard, *La Domination Française à Madagascar* (1920), p. 199 *et seq.*

<sup>23</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 28/11/95 and 20/3/96 (Berthelot), 31/5/96 (Hantaux), 21/7/96; Senate, 12/7/96. The law and *exposé des motifs* are in *Journal Officiel*, 8/8/96.



manner, and, whatever decisions Paris might come to, the methods of administration implied in a protectorate had to emerge. The only point was whether they should emerge naturally, as in Tunisia, or after a period of travail and suffering, as in Tonkin: and, fortunately for Madagascar, the facts of the situation allowed only the former solution.

The protectorate theory, interpreted primarily as meaning abstention, had broken down on the spot as well as in Paris. Though the conquest had not been completed, the French stood still, and, with a fanatical population desiring war above all things, this was tantamount to a premium on anarchy. Fanatical bands rose all over the south, because Duchesne had prematurely repatriated part of his forces: the northern religious extremists rose to defend the national talismans, the red *lambas*, but the French thought them only bands of cattle-thieves and did nothing: to dispel their doubts, the south rose too, and, for the sake of pillage, the west and even the slothful Sakalavas, hitherto the French allies, joined in the movement. All of Emyrna fell into rebel hands, and only the south-west remained quiet. Naturally, talk of a protectorate, with the freedom of native development which this was deemed to imply, was inapplicable under such conditions, and France, where a new Ministry was not averse to tossing overboard the protectorate theory introduced by Ribot's Cabinet, declared for Gallicanization and strong measures,—for anything rather than an emphasis on native organizations.\*

To effect this, they decided to send out a man accustomed to native races, and at once a soldier and a *colonial de carrière*. The result was that, in August, 1896, with the position vitiated by the ten months of drift, they sent Joseph-Simon Galliéni, fresh from Tonkin,—the man who had said that organization was more than conquest, and whose concisely expressed code fitted in very well with the existing psychology of the French Ministry. "In everything down there," said Galliéni, "there must first be a maturely studied plan, then a decision, and then prompt and effective action." To ears wearied with reports of epidemic risings and tired of arm-chair theories of colonial organization, this terse statement seemed just what was wanted; and, exactly a year after the occupation of Antananarivo, Galliéni landed in Madagascar.

## II. Galliéni

Galliéni, perhaps the greatest figure in French colonial history, really made Madagascar: more, he secured the acceptance of the native policies and administrative methods which he enforced there as the normal colonial methods of France; and it may safely be said that, if there is a turning-point in the history of French colonialization, it was when he landed

\* *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 8/12/96 (Michelin).

in Madagascar. He had had a long colonial experience, and was the embodiment of that varied training which the French method gives. But, in addition, he was possessed of a suppleness and sympathetic tact which, not always a characteristic of French colonial administrators, when possessed, transmutes the experience gained in a variety of colonies into a wealth of human-material, and makes of this particular type of French officer perhaps the *beau-ideal* colonial administrator. Galliéni had fought in West Africa in the wars of expansion and had concluded the treaty of 1881 with Ahmadou, thus extending the Niger protectorate to Timbuktu. There, in reorganizing the land, and in managing such diverse peoples as the pastoral Peuhls, the agricultural Bambaras, and the industrial Mandingues, with a leaven of fanatical Toucouleurs, he had worked out that "policy of races" with which he was to transform Madagascar. In Tonkin, where he next went, he had gone further and had evolved his "*tache d'huile*" or oil-stain method, of a gradual percolation of influence through any conquered country, with stress on intelligence-officers rather than the military. In this manner he had subdued the hitherto impenetrable provinces of Upper-Tonkin (1891-1895), and, fresh from this success, and convinced that his African and Indo-Chinese experiences could dovetail together into a new policy that would transform colonial methods, he came to Madagascar,—with a theory tested and made harmonious by experience, and especially applicable to lands where, as in Madagascar, a number of vigorous and apparently irreconcilable tribes dwelt side by side.<sup>25</sup>

His theory was "a policy of races," and, as the very name implies, meant a certain diversified development, a development attuned to the needs of each particular race, and varying with the position of each. When he landed, he was confronted by a record of failure on failure, and a disconcerting vagueness of methods and objectives. To commence with, he cleared the air by postulating certain general principles, and at once removed those fragmentary policies which were either mutually irreconcilable or in themselves unwise. Thus, he asserted in the first place that Madagascar was primarily a native-country and that, consequently, policy had to be determined by and for native ends. This was not a white-man's land; it was unsuitable for any extensive degree of small settlement; in 1895, there were only 845 Europeans in all, and only forty-five of these were planters. The only trade was in cloth, and this for native needs. Madagascar was entirely native, and, the productivity of the country being what it was, had to continue thus. The development of the land rested entirely with the natives, and, this once grasped, Galliéni was able to shear off those contradictory policies which had

<sup>25</sup> His life is summarized in appendix to Grandidier (1923), *op. cit.*, p. 241.

previously been attempted, and to make the regeneration of the Hovas and the inland tribesmen his primary care.<sup>28</sup>

But, even so, the natives could not develop of themselves without some outside guidance,—Galliéni had had sufficient experience of backward races to know that : and it was in accord neither with their needs nor the interests of France to continue the previous negative policy of abstention. Therefore, the second part in his programme came to be a very real control. This at once implied the reversal of the traditional French policy of strengthening the Hovas,—of making their rule coterminous with the island, and then controlling island destinies through them. To the contrary, held Galliéni, the Hova power had to be sapped, both as a measure of general policy and as the most economical course of action under the circumstances. "My programme," he wrote, "is to make Madagascar French, to sap the English influence, and to lower the pride and power of the Hovas." France was no longer to buttress the power of any one kingdom or tribe against the others : rather was there to be a balance of power between the tribes and a development of each. Accordingly, emphasis was placed on winning over the lesser tribes, who were often, especially in the south, the more virile ones, and on abolishing Hova hegemony. The Queen was exiled to Réunion, and the Merina Kingdom entirely abolished (February, 1897). The new theory thus came to mean a direct control by the French and a ban on rule through any intermediary native kingdom.

But here Galliéni added his third note. Direct control in other lands meant assimilation, and it would appear that the reversal of the Ribot idea of a protectorate would involve this necessary concomitant of annexation. This was not so, the new Resident-General brusquely asserted : annexation and assimilation were *not* inevitable corollaries one of the other : assimilation was but one method, and a discredited method, of translating annexation into practice : protectorate methods, in so far as they meant development along native lines and as far as possible through native agencies, could be carried on quite as well in an annexed colony as in a protectorate. Thus, Madagascar was never made an experimental-ground for assimilation. "No assimilation" (except in justice), Galliéni asserted time and again, and this was perhaps the leading feature of his policy. This interpretation was not popular at the time. As has been seen, the trend of Parliament in 1896 was all to the contrary, and de Mahy, the Vice-President of the Deputies, had voiced current opinion in saying, "We must make of Madagascar a colony of French *peuplement*, a French land, and a market reserved to Frenchmen

<sup>28</sup> For conditions, see Galliéni's first "Rapport d'ensemble sur la situation générale de Madagascar," 1899, in *Journal Officiel*, 7/5/99 et seq.

under our law." France, even after Galliéni was sent out, seemed to expect some such compound of extreme assimilation and small emigration.

Against this, Galliéni stood out in no uncertain way. With his usual forceful arguments and dogmatic certainty, he said:—

"In all that touched tradition and the customs bequeathed them by ancestors, I resolved only to make those reforms necessitated by their state of civilization, and to realize even those only progressively. The precept of one of our historians that *the power of tradition fructifies new institutions* is profoundly true in colonial administration. The road to follow could not be better explained, nor the Utopianism revealed of those people who, misunderstanding the nature of atavism and mental heredity, think that they can destroy the work of centuries in a few months and wish to attain the immediate assimilation of a new people by the application *en bloc* of the institutions of the metropolis." <sup>27</sup>

To this stage, he had been removing preliminary misconceptions rather than outlining a practical policy. Now, with irrelevancies swept aside, and with a clear realization that policy had to be for the natives, based on a real control, and with no vestige of assimilation, he could go further and outline his actual methods. These methods could be divided into two sections,—a general combination of "political-cum-military" agencies, and a utilization of each race in Madagascar.

The first of these was the key-note of the whole,—the famous "*tache d'huile*" method invented and utilized by him and later popularized (but in no sense invented) by Marshal Lyautey in Morocco.<sup>28</sup> Galliéni's method was to choose strategic centres and from these, by entering into the lives of the people at once and convincing them of the solidarity of interests between the two parties, extend French influence in a gradually widening and perfectly consolidated circle. An oil-stain spreads outwards on blotting-paper, so French influence, based on the firm foundation of native collaboration, could extend in Madagascar, even over the inhospitable brigands of the mountain-lands. This meant a limitation of military efforts and an emphasis on *liaison*-officers who would play a far more important part than soldiers in the work of reconstruction. Hitherto, the soldiers had been viewed as the necessary fore-runners of a subsequent organization: Galliéni made the point that they themselves were the organizers, and that conquest and organization, far from being successive stages, were to each increase *pari passu*. By June, 1897, he had organized the central plateau, "and this result," he wrote, "has been achieved by the constant application of the principle

<sup>27</sup> Galliéni, *Neuf Ans à Madagascar* (1908), p. 274. For the opposite argument, see Brunet, *La France à Madagascar* (1895), p. xxviii.

<sup>28</sup> Galliéni (1908), *op. cit.*, p. 47.

the efficiency of which I have described,—a combination of military and political action in taking possession of the country, and, at the same time, entering into an intimate contact with the natives, trying to learn their tendencies and their psychology, and, by satisfying their desires, to attach them of their own volition to the new institutions."

However trite this may seem at present, it was an entirely new emphasis in the French colonial-world of 1895, for up to that time the army had been viewed as "the be-all and end-all" of colonial methods. The procedure had been to let the army do its utmost destruction of things native, and then decree an orderly structure of assimilation: whether the two linked together and met the situation was not considered; French colonies were either assimilated to a homeland *département* or remained under the iconoclastic rule of the army. But now, on the other hand, Galliéni was proposing to make the army in itself build up rather than destroy, and not only this, but to stabilize an organization which was to be permanent and to dispense with elaborate constitutions. The phrase, "organic statute," had been the curse of French colonization: Galliéni was removing it. The ready-made constitutions which the Parisian *bureaux* could so readily produce either for Senegalese tribesmen or indolent Polynesians were no longer needed. Galliéni was revolting against such *a priori* methods as much as against the use of insensate force: he was staking the future on a changed concept of the army's rôle and on a changed part left to the natives.

Political action and military action were to go on concurrently, with the former "by far the more important," and the latter more as a safeguard in time of emergency than anything else. It was the races themselves that determined the methods both of the initial conquest and the subsequent organization; and the utilization of force was to depend on the recalcitrance or progressiveness of the tribe in question. It was, on the face of things, absurd to suppose that an equal amount of force was needed for each race, for that would be to postulate a uniform "savage" and an exact similarity of conditions in each case. To the contrary, methods were to be variable and elastic. "Political-cum-military action," then, was to shape the political organization, the extent of each varying with the needs of the actual situation, but, wherever possible, with military means only as an ultimate resource. After that,—the third factor, economic action, was to enter to make the tribesmen progressive and to make the original organization permanent and part of the normal lives of the natives.<sup>29</sup>

The last factor stressed by Galliéni was one necessitated by the

<sup>29</sup> See his instructions of 22/5/98, in *Neuf Ans à Madagascar* (1908), p. 326.

presence of so many antagonistic races with whom he had to deal at once. Once Hova hegemony was destroyed, each of the native races had to be convinced of the need for progress on its own lines, otherwise all would slump into stagnation or into the former internecine warfare, both of which eventualities would vitiate the whole of Galliéni's carefully elaborated scheme. He therefore promulgated his "policy of races," which was to introduce each race to its position as a collaborator with the French, and to open to it a certain line of development. He realized that lack of outlets for racial pride and lack of scope for energy would both hasten racial decline and perhaps that scourge of Madagascar with which he was for ever confronted,—positive depopulation. To allay this, he had to introduce a tangible goal for each race, and means and incentive of reaching that goal. Instead of Hova hegemony, there was to be a confederacy of native units, each evolving in the light of its own *milieu*, each retaining its individuality and energy, and each associated with the French overlords.

Galliéni was quite specific about this point. In his instructions to his *Chefs de Provinces* in October, 1896, he clearly defined the objective,—“to dispossess the Hova authorities and to separate the people into their various racial groups, administered by their own chiefs under the advice of Residents, without forcing them to a uniform method of organization and administration for the whole island, for the manners, the customs, and the character of each people have to be considered.” The vassal-populations were thus called to *kabary* or council to choose chiefs for themselves, and the tribal structures of the free populations respected. After this, they were as far as possible to rule themselves,—the policy being what the French later called “association” or “the collaboration of races,” and the English “indirect rule.”

In this manner, Galliéni's theory consisted of five points, each logically dependent on its predecessor, and all dovetailing together to form a coherent plan,—“the policy of races.” But theory and practice were quite different worlds, and it remained for him to convert this theory to meet the troubled conditions of the Madagascar of 1896.

When he landed, even the road to Antananarivo was menaced, and France held only the three posts of Majunga and Diégo-Suarez (both isolated outposts in the far north) and the country round Tamatave, and fully 99 per cent. of the country was in armed revolt. A year later, he had subdued most of the east, with its gentler and more apathetic natives, and, with half of the land under his control and a solid line of posts on the Emyrna frontier, he was in a position to drive back the Sakalava raids from the west,—and all the time he was subordinating a cataclysmic military advance to his slower and less spectacular, but far more effective,

policy of "pacification and administration." But it was not until the end of 1898 that he effectively occupied most of the west, and not until January, 1902, that the always-anarchical south, the land of the marauding Baras and Mahafalys, was conquered: even in the centre, pacification was not sufficiently general to allow the substitution of civil for military authority until 1901, and the displacement of military officials was of necessity far slower in the outer regions which had never known any restraint.<sup>30</sup>

Galliéni, too, was held back by the very strangeness of what were to the French obvious concepts, and he had to introduce rudimentary notions of government and social organization. The amount of preliminary spade-work was enormous, and France tended to become restive, because, by constant emphasis on "the Hova kingdom," the French mind had come to view Madagascar rather as a backward Tunisia than as, say, a savage Fiji. A uniform system of justice, the universal freedom of men, the idea of a Public Treasury, taxation without exemption, individual or group-ownership,—all of these were practically unknown concepts in the Madagascar of that time, and the various peoples had painfully to be set in the path of communal advance, before any general schemes of reconstruction could be entertained.

Thus, it was not until some years had elapsed that Galliéni could really attack his problem, for the Malagasians had first to be taught the nature of liberty, and, in particular, that the essence of liberty is restraint,—ideas especially difficult in the case of an Oriental people accustomed to, and thinking in terms of, absolute power, and viewing liberty either as unrestrained licence or as the freedom to exploit somebody else. A character-training or a social education had first to be instituted, and Galliéni could not introduce his final native organization until 1903. In the previous year he had made the first tentative efforts to use native-officials in the Hova plateau, which had naturally seen the bulk of French efforts, and had experimented with the peculiarly democratic council which the Hovas had obviously inherited from their Polynesian forefathers,—reminiscent as it is of the Samoan *fono*. This is "a kind of government in the public square," where the inhabitants of a given group meet to discuss public matters. Savages are nothing if not ceremonial, and Galliéni quickly perceived how important a psychological influence such a gathering could exert, firm-built on native traditions as it was and reviving the traditional past as it did. "*Tsy izany ve ry vahoaka?*"—"Is it not so, O people?" cry the orators; and the assembled council reply with a booming voice, "*Izany!*" ("It is so!")

<sup>30</sup> Galliéni (1908), *op. cit.*, p. 47.

and disperse with the consciousness that each member is immediately and personally a part of the body-politic.<sup>31</sup>

So successful was this revival of native institutions that Galliéni extended it in 1903, and, in addition to the above *foko'nolona*, set up the *ben'ny tany*, or council of notables in each district to act as *liaison-officers* between natives and European officials. They would at once bring the Government home to the people and allow the commoners to voice their grievances and propose reforms. Such bodies, justified by their success in central Emyrna, were extended to all Hova territories in 1904, and even to the Betsimisaraka country, although the recency of the conquest there necessitated a more direct and stringent form of control. At the same time (July, 1903) the individual native-officials were definitely given a leading part in organization: hitherto, they had been on trial and were only *agents de transmission*, or messengers, and it was not known whether Galliéni's hope of making them the basis of provincial administration could ever come to fruition. But, certain by 1903 that pacification was genuine, that the new social reforms had been assimilated, and that the individual chiefs were capable of progress under the changed conditions, he resolved to introduce the new *régime*,<sup>32</sup> and to transform the native-officials from mere *agents de transmission* into *agents d'exécution*, that is, to give them definite powers. They were to have charge of various administrative and economic functions, and even financial power on a small local scale: they were, in fact, to be the local governors as well as mouthpieces of the central Government. Thus, powerful individual agents and assemblies were to give the natives a part in administration, the extension to the wilder Betsimisarakas showing that this was no mere gesture to the Hovas but a genuine "policy of association," to be extended to all tribes as soon as their situation warranted it, and to vary in scope with the needs of each tribal-unit.

Madagascar, therefore, was divided into three sections, differentiated according to the degree of native self-government in each. In the more advanced parts, as on the Emyrna plateau, the *régime* of delegated authority, or as the English would term it, "indirect rule," was in full operation. Each district had a European Chief or Resident who presided over the advisory Council of Native Notables and supervised native affairs in general. The lesser officials under him were all natives, both the governors and the tax-collectors; and the organization was similarly divided right down to the lowest unit,—the village chief and the *Foko'nolona* or Council. The European element in these regions was restricted to the general determination of policy and the supervision of the whole

<sup>31</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, April 1902, p. 149; Galliéni (1908), *op. cit.*, pp. 206, 241.

<sup>32</sup> In full in *Journal Officiel de Madagascar*, 8/7/03.



machine: under ordinary conditions, everything was in native hands, and there was thus a real indirect rule. But such an extensive devolution of authority presupposed a genuine desire to co-operate on the part of the natives, and moreover, both the capacity of societal advance and the means of converting this capacity into reality, both of them dependent on an adequate training. Most of Madagascar, therefore, remained under direct administration by French officials, as with the Betsimisaraka, but a small, and gradually widening, element of indirect rule was allowed as conditions warranted it. This was essentially a training stage, to fit natives for that ultimate degree of self-government which had been attained by the Hovas on the central plateau. Assemblies of Notables and native officials were introduced very slowly in these cases, and, for a long time, would be restricted to small functions within the villages, for the essential need in this stage was to develop a group frame of mind and to introduce the ideas of communal responsibility and contractual authority. But even this compromise, limited as it was, was too far advanced for the fighting tribes of the south, and so the third system in Madagascar was "the *régime* of interior protectorates,"<sup>33</sup> in which, as with the Ménabés and Baras, the natives were left alone as long as they kept the peace. There was little direct administration here, little intervention: all that the French officials did was to advise the native chiefs. These districts, in short, were rather fields of abstention than training-grounds for indirect rule.<sup>34</sup>

Galliéni thus worked out methods of native rule varying from a protectorate in its widest form to pure indirect rule, and a system that allowed of variation within each province. Moreover, it combined efficiency for the moment with hope for the future, and rested almost entirely on native collaboration. In fact, it was the first occasion on which the French elaborated a policy of indirect rule on an extensive scale, and the first occasion on which a hope of ultimate self-government on palatable native lines was extended to a subject-population.

But this was only one phase of the problem. It was very promising to provide for an ultimate self-government and an immediate collaboration to some degree: but Galliéni had first to save the natives. He saw that, in his zeal for experimenting with possibilities of a remote future, he could not leave their bodies for immediate dissolution; and the condition of Madagascar in 1895 was such that, if he adopted such an idealistic *laissez-faire* policy, his problem would all be self-annulled,—by the depopulation of those for whose future welfare he was planning.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Sept. 1904, p. 284.

<sup>34</sup> See tables for these three systems in Galliéni (1908), p. 331.

<sup>35</sup> Galliéni's first *Rapport d'Ensemble*, 1899, pp. 206-210.

There were 2,260,000 natives in the island in 1897, and they were rapidly declining, owing to the enfeeblement of their physique and the psychology of despair which was the consequence of physical decay. It must be remembered that the Malagasians are basically a Polynesian people, and, as with all Polynesians, that power of mind over body, which is always so strong with native peoples, is positively abnormal. The will-to-die is an immediately realizable possibility with the average Polynesian ;<sup>36</sup> and they are prone to a racial despair which, by its nature, is the gatekeeper of death, and knows no remedy, so long as the individuals concerned retain their lethargic and indifferent frame of mind. A dejected *insouciance*, if permanent, means death with such people, irrespective of bodily weakness, and naturally, if the body is already enfeebled, the efficacy of the death-spell, the web of destructive auto-suggestion with which the native surrounds himself, is increased. Such a race must progress and be convinced of the reality of progress according to its own lights, or it dies : its spark of vitality is dependent on the continuance of its traditions and the certainty of its own self-expression : hence the importance of Galliéni's revival of the *foko'nolona*. If it can see no avenue of expression, if its thwarted instincts fall inwards on themselves and find expression in a mortified despair, then the virility of the race is sapped, and the individual gives up the struggle. He sees a place for himself neither at the moment nor in the future, but only the hand of the foreigner over everything, and nothing, not even life itself, becomes worth while ; and the places of rest in their mythology beckon to them, and gladly they die.

This was exactly the case with the Malagasians. The French found a natural *penchant* for this introspective disease aggravated by the evils of last century. "Decimated by the persecutions of the last reigns and ruined by an arbitrary system of taxes and *corvées*, the Malay of Emyrna had lost all energy and had fallen into that state of resigned misery and those habits of idleness and *insouciance* which are the sad fate of peoples oppressed by tyranny."<sup>37</sup> And Galliéni might have added, the peculiar legacy of Polynesian peoples, with whom self-annihilation by mental processes makes change, and especially disruptive change, so important ! Their minds were predisposed to death, and when their environment, through their diseased eyes, took on all the characteristics of a phantasm of gloom, death loomed very near. The *vazahy* was supreme in everything : his ways were not their ways : and they had but to go to their

<sup>36</sup> S. H. Roberts, *Population Problems of the Pacific* (1927), Part I, for these attributes of the Polynesians. A good study in the form of a novel is in C. Renel, *Le Décivilisé*.

<sup>37</sup> Galliéni (1908), *op. cit.*, pp. 49, 50.

own world, the world of their cultural forbears, the world whose spirits beckoned in the wooden tombs of their graveyards in the forest. There was a certain fatalism and a tinge of spectacular self-abnegation about this process that made it dear to the heart of the savage, and indeed something almost desirable,—a welcome release when particularly irksome tasks confronted him, or when the ultimate horror, of having to work permanently and consistently, loomed prominently in front of him. And, since the disease was psychological, its remedy was the more difficult, because nothing in the French surgeon's pharmacopœia could deal with such intangible complaints: indeed, with natives dying round him, his books would assure him that this particular form of racial *hari-kari* by self-suggestion was non-existent.

Even physically the task was sufficiently formidable, without the incubus of this general "will-to-die" which made the native the arbiter of his destinies and the despair of the French administrators, for the conditions of native life had enfeebled their bodies, and the new diseases engendered by contact with the Europeans, and the more terrible because the natives had no immunity, either innate or acquired, wrecked their constitutions entirely. Constant wars, the slave-trade with Zanzibar, and the prevalence of abortion and infanticide had kept down the population, and, even when the first two of these were removed, the latter increased as life became harder; and families became smaller and smaller, owing to debauchery and alcoholism and the increased difficulties of even living. Life had become a problem, and the new vices were easier to absorb, and far more pleasant, than the peculiar virtues of the French civilization, such as work and tax-paying. Add to this formidable list tuberculosis and meningitis, influenza and measles, their grip increasing as the native body became more and more enfeebled: and the fact of depopulation may be easily understood.

Galliéni's main problem, therefore, and the main problem in Madagascar to-day, was to make the natives live.<sup>38</sup> He placed health in the forefront of his efforts, for depopulation was increasing in every part of the island, especially with the Sakalavas. Two months after his arrival he instituted a medical school to train native doctors, and gave orders to provide the natives with a free health-service, and, perhaps most important of all, commenced to combat the influence of the sorcerers who, especially in the wilder and more primitive south, were the most enervating and destructive force in native life.

But he quickly perceived that the real evil lay far deeper and that it was useless to try to cure disease: the problem was to check it, and to erase that peculiar psychology of despair which was the cause of

<sup>38</sup> Galliéni's second *Rapport d'Ensemble*, 1899-1905, p. 523.

everything. The issue was psychological rather than medical; so too Galliéni's cure, to be effective, had to be directed towards the natives' minds, and incidentally their bodies would improve. The disease was that hope had gone from them: to revive it, they had to have new interests, interests that would convince them that the past could be emulated and improved, and that the future held a real place for them and their children. Their participation in government and the safeguarding of as many of their customs as possible had convinced them of their cultural safeguards: now, the immediate problem was to provide the individual with a psychology of hope and fighting. Galliéni perceived that the key to this lay in economic self-advancement,—that, once stimulated to the development of his land and once accustomed to the increased facilities that this would make possible, the native could then save himself. But it would be useless to try to convince him of this by argument or persuasion: the ordinary Malagasian thought only of the present, and was not even convinced that that was worth troubling over: and the confirmed fatalism of the Polynesian knew nothing of the morrow, save as a day which must possibly be lived through. The natives, therefore, had to be introduced to the benefits of the new *régime* by force: beneficent tutelage is the only way of advance for a racial stock as enervated as the Malagasian. On the other hand, the tutelage clearly had to be free from any taint of exploitation, otherwise the native pessimism would be the firmer imbedded. To meet this need, and to force the natives to develop their land despite themselves, and incidentally to transform their mental outlook (and improve the State finances), Galliéni hit upon the device of "social taxation,"—that is, taxation so directed in its incidence as to induce the natives to work, and not for any European planters, but for themselves, the idea being that, once accustomed to the new groove, the natives, their *insouciance* being what it is, would continue in that groove, and thus change their minds and redeem their bodies.

That Galliéni had connected all of these arguments in a coherent theory and that his taxes were really "socially" directed is beyond dispute; and the matter is important, because this theory of natives being forced to work by "social taxes" is now part of the generally accepted native policy of colonizing Powers (e.g., in places as widely apart as Kenya and New Guinea), and because it was first worked out in a connected practical form by Galliéni in Madagascar. He saw that work was the key to the whole difficulty,—and the optimistic psychology engendered by the obvious results of work. As he said explicitly:—

"In Madagascar, as in all our new colonies, the experience of the first years of occupation has shown that the native-tax is the indispensable

stimulus of native energy. There is no doubt that the Malagasian, in all parts of his island, can almost always procure without appreciable efforts what he wants to nourish, lodge, and clothe him. Native indolence aiding, only a minority—and this minority is infinitesimal with the newly conquered peoples—conform to the health-giving law of work, without being directly incited to it. To leave the native in this state is to renounce for him all progress,—all improvement in his economic and social position. On the other hand, the employment of direct force, in such a case, is at once immoral, impolitic, and useless. The conclusion then is,—we must find, not a material means of coercion, but a stimulant, which pushes the natives to work and brings them little by little to understand its advantages. To do this, nothing is better than the tax, nothing can more efficiently fill such a useful and moralizing rôle.”<sup>39</sup>

This was especially needed in certain parts of the country. The Hovas themselves did not want it in the main, save as a preventive of lethargic despair, because they were good working agriculturists: but the newly-freed slave-castes did, because they thought that liberty meant, with other pleasant things, the right of doing nothing, ignoring the individual and social disintegration that followed in the wake of such a procedure. In the south and the west, the natives, predatory robbers by nature, did not work at all. Compulsion, therefore, though an attack on individual liberties in theory, was the best social and individual safeguard under such conditions. To meet the case, Galliéni reformed the system of native-taxation in 1904, and made it entirely social, varying its incidence to take into account the greater need for it in some districts. In backward regions, it could be paid in kind, and in certain provinces where social organization needed to be strengthened, a collective tax was permitted, with the native chiefs allocating the amounts under European supervision. Everywhere alike, however, it was to induce the natives to work, and the revenue was kept for educational and social purposes.<sup>40</sup>

The result was undoubted. Exports doubled between 1902 and 1904 in those coastal districts in which the tax was first imposed, and statistics of native commerce in Emyrna showed that the tax caused an expansion even with the comparatively energetic Hovas: while with the untamed outer tribes, the immediate causal relationship of the tax to economic change was the more certain, because the tax represented no small amount of labour under stone-age conditions, and because the provision for payment in kind permitted of no evasion. It was a genuine measure of social transformation, of consciously directed social evolution; and, as such, became one of the mainstays of French policy in Madagascar.

<sup>39</sup> Galliéni (1908), *op. cit.*, p. 272.

<sup>40</sup> Lorin, *L'Empire Colonial de la France* (1906), pp. 261, 262, for a good analysis of the aims of the tax.

In 1922, it assumed its present form, and became far more direct in its incidence. Galliéni had been content to tax the native and thus indirectly to make him work. But, by 1922, the administration felt that it could go further, and directly ordered the natives to work in some way for at least 180 days a year or pay a tax, the proceeds to go towards the development of agriculture.<sup>41</sup>

With social taxation, Galliéni linked education in his scheme of things, because the two, in his mind, were kindred and connected steps towards the agricultural revolution which was to sweep over Madagascar. Before 1895 the natives had been self-sufficient and could largely live without working. They consumed little outside produce and lacked power to purchase much. The ground afforded rice, potatoes, and manioc; a desultory pasture gave meat for feasts; if luxurious, the individual could buy Manchester cloth; and what more was needed, unless he were æsthete enough to abandon native weapons and want one of the rifles the Indian traders peddled for taking potshots from the bush at Frenchmen? Galliéni saw that this position was incompatible with progress, and that the native had to become a producer and a member of a wider exchange-group. He had to be familiarized with the concept of growing for sale, and thus becoming a consumer of other people's produce; that is, the market had to be introduced as the nerve-centre of native life, instead of the self-sufficient family. But this needed the desire to work and the capability of working; and it was the tax that was to induce the former, vocational education the latter.

That is, Galliéni insisted on a strictly utilitarian education,—a stand the more remarkable because in practically every other French colony at the time, France was adhering to her traditional literary methods. Pépète in Algeria, Rarahu in Tahiti, and little Ahmadou in West Africa were all trained as Jean Blanc was on the Left Bank in Paris: but Galliéni saw that the differing native needs necessitated a vitally different mode of instruction, that his Lanalo and Rademari had to be a trained farmer and an artisan, and moreover, that, without this, his whole structure of native policy would lack stability. As early as 1897, therefore, he established a solely professional school at Antananarivo, and insisted on the need of "giving the native an education that was above all practical and utilitarian." His school on the central plateau had 800 pupils within six years and gave instructions in no fewer than seven distinct practical vocations.<sup>42</sup> By 1903, Galliéni had set up 650 schools in the island, with 50,000 pupils, mostly, of course, in the more advanced central

<sup>41</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Jan. 1922, p. 46.

<sup>42</sup> *Compte Rendu du Congrès de l'Afrique Orientale*, 1912, p. 40 et seq.; Galliéni (1908), *op. cit.*, pp. 51-53, 242-244.

plateau, but already spreading to the north and east. Though the development since that date had been more restrained (to 750 schools and 77,000 students by 1922), the professional aspect of education has retained its original emphasis, especially during the serious campaign to extend agricultural education in the years after 1916. Each elementary school has a garden, each main one an *atelier* to teach the rudiments of the various local industries, and each regional school has a distinct industrial section. As the official programme runs, they give "a primary manual education which the students may be able to utilize for themselves and which will increase their social value," and which, it might be added, is still very rare in French colonies in general.<sup>43</sup>

Galliéni's native policy, as viewed backwards from to-day, may not seem so very unconventional, but, interpreted in the light of 1900, it formed a whole which was strikingly coherent and progressive. At that time, the custom was either to ignore the natives or make them labour for Europeans: even the progressive colonies did no more than provide embryonic health-facilities and a smattering of French literary education for a minority. But Galliéni not only reserved the land for the natives and placed their interests in the ascendant, but laid the basis for their ultimate self-government on native lines, provided for an economic revolution which was to spell for them both prosperity and a psychology of hope, and arranged comprehensive schemes of medical attention and vocational education. Practically every part of this scheme was in advance of the times: the whole policy, cemented by the device of "social taxation," is at present advocated as the ideal native policy for progressive colonial Powers; and nowhere is the theory so carefully developed, stage by stage, as in Galliéni's two *Rapports d'Ensemble* and his *Neuf Ans à Madagascar*.<sup>44</sup> His native policy was at least two decades in advance of its time as a general theory, and, more than that, in so far as French colonial policy was concerned. It is this fact, and the consequent freedom from native discontent, that has marked off Madagascar so clearly from every other French colony. Before the war of 1914, Tunisia might have vied with the island for this place, but even there, there was the *Jeune Tunisien* movement and the unsettled ebullience of the war-period; whereas, in Madagascar, the *rapprochement* between natives and French has been continually growing. A force of 5,863 Malagasians volunteered during the war, and the land claims to be "Oriental France," with the solidarity extending more and more with the passing of the years, even to the turbulent tribesmen of the inner

<sup>43</sup> *Annuaire Général de Madagascar*, 1920-1921, Vol. II, p. 249; A. Dondouau, *Géographie du Madagascar* (1922), pp. 176-178.

<sup>44</sup> In 1899, 1905 and 1908 respectively,—all quoted above.

mountains. Indeed, the French success with the Baras and Mahafalys is one of the mysteries of their colonial record, the only explanation being that something in the French temperament seems to promote an understanding with these peoples of Polynesian descent, just as in Tahiti. But, whatever the cause, there is no doubt that Galliéni's native policy has transformed Madagascar and has been in many ways the greatest colonial victory of France.

This point is best proved by a comparison of the land when Galliéni came in 1896 and when he left in May, 1905. When he landed, he found

"in the aggregate, a huge and impenetrable forest, where mutually hostile tribes lived in a brutish isolation: in the centre, a cultivated plateau, inhabited by two peoples, the Hovas and the Betsileos, who were half-awakening to civilization but who were a prey to the exactions of the Court and the nobles. On the coast, there were certain ports, extremely precarious posts through which a rare commerce filtered in and where the first roots of colonization were being implanted. From Majunga to Antananarivo, there was a road lined with the wreckages of our Lefevre gun-carriages, and seamed by the tombs of our soldiers. From Tamatave to the capital was a line of ditches, with gaps of 600 metres and more,—a collection of crevasses and ravines. Over all, as the presiding evil genius, were incessant raids,—raids of pirates, of rebels, of the *Fakavolos*, all caused by the inveterate anarchy, the miseries of warfare, and the constant intrigues of the Hova Court." <sup>45</sup>

It was a terrible forbidding land, a country of phantasm and gloom, knowing neither order nor safety. As Hanotaux said, "Galliéni received an insurgent forest, he made it a tranquil and prosperous colony." The most obvious change was peace and development,—aspects which had not characterized Madagascar in any previous era. All of the land was pacified, most of it was changing from military to civil control, part of it (the central plateau) was almost completely self-governing, and another section, the land of the Betsimisarakas, partly so. Native institutions had been revived, especially the *Foko'nolona*, and councils of notables instituted. The blight of the Hovas had been removed, and in their place the progressive lower orders of Hova society raised, and the outside tribes restored to their liberty and organizations. The central plateau and the east-coast regions were lands of progressive native-farmers, with medical and educational systems extending over their whole nation; and these characteristics and facilities were gradually extending to the south and west. The natives in general had traversed an economic revolution, and the enlargement of their economic world involved a corresponding mental revolution, and, incidentally, a grave blow to the pre-existing psychology of despair, which was so inimical to racial vigour.

<sup>45</sup> Galliéni (1908), *op. cit.*, p. viii.



Internal trade had really been created, and external commerce increased.<sup>46</sup> The total trade had increased from 2 million francs to 43 millions, and the central budget from 5½ million francs in 1899 to 24½ millions in 1905. The metropolitan grant-in-aid was no longer needed, and the colony already had reserves of almost 10 million francs.

In addition, it was in the intangible social changes that there had been an even greater transformation,—with the abolition of slavery and exploitation in all forms, and the provision for social progress, and the emergence of the individual thus made possible. In 1895, Madagascar resolved itself into one half ruled through the fear instilled by an alien noble-class, and another half subject to the slave-raids of outside brigands: there was no certainty of existence, or, in the exceptional cases in which there was security, no hope. On the other hand, by 1905, the land had become safe and democratized, and, from Diégo-Suarez in the north to Fort Dauphin in the south, there were individuals on a par,—some backward, it is true, but all equal before the law and with a possibility of advance, both of which were unimaginable contingencies in the Madagascar of the Hovas. The French had removed slavery and the uncertainty of existence: and, in addition, had introduced the notion of individualism and societal equality,—their greatest achievement.

In short, as Galliéni said, “the country was at peace and becoming organized and enriched,” and, even if there had been a relapse of trade in his last two years, and even if he had somewhat neglected the economic development of the country, he had laid the firm foundations on which his successors could develop the land on the ordinary lines. He had performed the extraordinary task of winning over and organizing the natives, his followers could consolidate his achievements.

### III. Madagascar since 1905

Since 1905, therefore, the history of Madagascar has been quiet, the absence of facts to record being perhaps the best testimony to the permanence of Galliéni's *rapprochement* with the natives and the best sign of the steady economic consolidation that has absorbed activities. It is the spectacularly abnormal things that make a lengthy record—that is why failures take up such a large place in French colonial history,—whereas the quiet economic development passes almost unnoticed.

In the years immediately following Galliéni's departure, the economic problem was still further clarified. Galliéni had emphasized the natives and tended to forget trade, and thus the essentials of the problem had become a trifle blurred. The decline of trade in 1904–1905 had shown

<sup>46</sup> Article by Xion in *Revue de Madagascar*, 10/6/1900, or by Galliéni in *L'Année Coloniale*, 1900.

that something was wrong, and that native policy could be successful without, or even at the cost of, economic development. Even the direction of development, despite Galliéri's insistence on native claims, had become confused, and the old obsession of *petite colonisation* by immigrants from France had crept to the fore. Before any permanent progress could take place, therefore, the relationship of this settlement to native efforts had to be determined, and the degree of emphasis to be placed on it in the future made clear.

Before the French conquest, the Hova Government owned all the land, and, owing to the feudal structure of society, the notion of individual land-ownership was either completely non-existent, or, in the trading-districts, barely nascent. The land naturally went to the French Government on conquest, but the question arose as to the claims of the natives and the European settlers. For the former, the issue was settled by making the natives peasant-proprietors: a law of 1896 thus said that "the natives shall continue to enjoy land on which they have built or which they are at present cultivating."<sup>47</sup> They were at a stroke introduced to the idea of individual property, and, under the conditions, this necessitated an economic revolution, for the idea of personal property meant competition and the resultant advance. It only remained for new methods and the provision of exchange-facilities to complete the revolution, and to allow a progressive yeomanry to take the place of the unenterprising serfs of the Hova *régime*.

But this guarantee of the natives' rights was clearly not very compatible with European settlement. In those parts of the land where the so-called "rich cultures," like cocoa and vanilla, were possible, such settlement was indispensable if new methods were to be adopted. But, if this were the aim, capitalistic instead of small settlement would seem to have been called for, and yet the French were filled with the idea of setting up a small emigrant-class in Madagascar, akin to the Creole class in the neighbouring Réunion. Therefore, the administration provided both for schemes of large and small settlement,<sup>48</sup> although the Congo *débâcle* prevented any very extensive handing-over of the island to large companies. In all, only eight large concessions were granted, all in the experimental stage before 1905, and the Deputies refused to sanction the principle of extensive alienations by a land-grant railway. This was held to be an undesirable mortgage on the country's future development, and France saw that it was prejudicial to the interests of all concerned to gamble with the colony's land.

<sup>47</sup> L. Truitard, *Madagascar et les Intérêts françaises* (1912), p. 54.

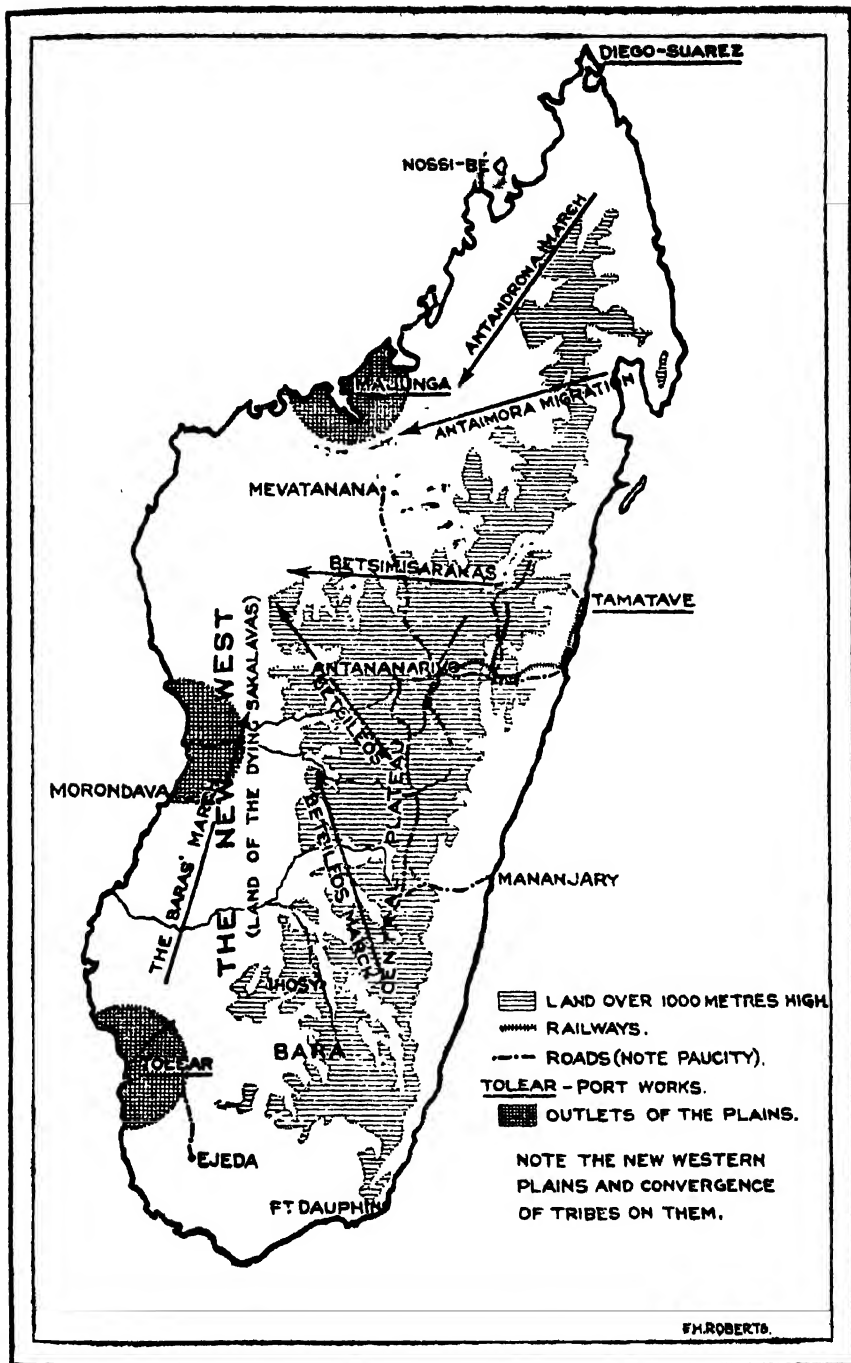
<sup>48</sup> For history see *Compte Rendu du Congrès de l'Afrique Orientale*, 1912, p. 370 et seq.

Small free efforts were in favour, Galliéni himself devoting much attention to military colonization on the lines Bugeaud had attempted in Algeria half a century earlier.<sup>49</sup> "Official colonization" on the east coast, again on the best Algerian model, was another of his obsessions. Creole families, already acclimatized to tropical conditions, were brought in from Réunion and given land and materials. But the result was to turn him away from the idea of State-aided "official colonization." The immigrants were accustomed to the nonchalant *dolce far niente* of life in a sugar-colony, and, counting on the administration, abstained from initiative and often from work, so that the scheme was entirely a failure. Galliéni therefore resolved to stand aside and let colonization be either spontaneous or non-existent. A law of 1896 set up a homestead plan, giving a hundred hectares to every French settler on condition that the land was improved: otherwise, land could be bought in any quantity for two or three francs a hectare. The whole scheme was somewhat nebulous and haphazard, because it was already realized that such settlement was a minor detail rather than a leading fact in Madagascar's development: the land was clearly an Indo-China rather than an Algeria, in so far as small settlement was concerned, and, even if there was a scope for "middle settlement" on the Tunisian model, no demand existed on the part of capitalistic immigrants. Accordingly, the results of all the schemes were mediocre in the extreme. Up to 1905, 2,385 grants were given for an area of 404,904 hectares, but only 43 per cent. had been finalized by the performance of the necessary conditions, easily satisfied though they were. There were still only 630 European planters in the group, and they cultivated 18,000 hectares as compared with the 760,000 hectares improved by the natives.<sup>50</sup>

It was clear, therefore, that such development as there was had to be in native hands; but, when the Government services were organized to foster this development and to induce habits of industry in the natives, they were confronted by the great problem of Madagascar,—the automatic and increasingly stringent limit placed on development by the small and dwindling population. It was commonly thought that Madagascar was a land of teeming millions, whereas, in reality, with an area as large as France, there were only 2½ million natives, a great proportion of whom were feeble and decadent. The central plateau and the east were relatively densely peopled, but, even there, it is only in the immediate environs of Antananarivo that the population numbers twenty to the square kilometre: the south was far less peopled; the north still worse with less than two persons to the square kilometre; and the west was

<sup>49</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, April 1901, p. 121; Feb. 1903, p. 53.

<sup>50</sup> L. Truitard (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 49 *et seq.*; Galliéni (1908), p. 355.



## THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF MADAGASCAR.

practically empty. Indeed, right athwart the centre of the land is a long empty strip as big as several French *départements*.<sup>51</sup> The total native population, it is true, went up to 3,459,403 by 1925, but the increase was due rather to improved methods of taking the Census than to the prosperity of the natives themselves. It is a moot point as to how far the population is still decreasing: certainly, the survival-rate is falling off, and the changed methods of existence, as has been seen, take a constant toll of the population. Some races are rapidly giving way: the Sakalavas, in particular, the first French allies and formerly the most important race in the north, have already dwindled to 141,000 and are clearly on the way to extinction. On the other hand, the Hovas and Betsileos and the southern mountaineers are increasing, and it is with them that the future of Madagascar lies. But these races number in all less than two million people, and what can such a tiny number do in a tropical land the size of France? <sup>52</sup> So that, if Madagascar reproduces the conditions of native agriculture that pertain in Indo-China, it lacks the essential element of the Indo-Chinese population position,—the millions of prolific natives.

Accordingly, French efforts have centred on increasing the future supply of labour and safeguarding the present in Madagascar. To secure the former is "the policy of *crèches*," but such works of social assistance are limited by the monetary aspect and by the attitude of the natives themselves. Birth-control on the one hand and the general disintegration of native life on the other nullify the French efforts: even salutary social reforms like the abolition of slavery and the *corvée* seem to aid the enemy, as they deprive the natives of the health-giving necessity for work, and, under such conditions, unrestricted freedom is as bad as a noxious drug in inducing racial decay. In the last resort, the natives must save themselves, and, as always with indolent native populations, Galliéni's schemes for their regeneration through work is brought up against the rock of native heedlessness and passive opposition. This is what militates against the success of the schemes to provide a peasant-proprietorship, and at present is an almost insoluble difficulty in Madagascar, because, the tax to the contrary, the native, after the original constraint, must come to the new stage—or, at least, maintain himself in that stage—of his own volition. Madagascar is at present in the halting stage between the two systems.

The French, however, have retained and even increased the element of restraint. An *arrêté* of November, 1919, increased the poll-tax to the considerable amount of from 15 to 25 francs a year, imposed a tax on all rice-fields, and a land-tax payable by all residents of Madagascar. In

<sup>51</sup> See Map on page 409 for population density.

<sup>52</sup> Dondouau (1922), *op. cit.*, pp. 116, 117.

addition, a decree of 1910 had instituted a special "assistance" tax of three francs a year, the proceeds to go to free medical treatment for the natives, and amounting in 1920 to 2½ million francs.<sup>53</sup> But these indirect measures, accumulated though they were, still proved inadequate, and in 1919 the administration had to decree directly that every native should work 180 days in each year. Any such policy of socially directed force, however, has its limits, and certainly Galliéri's dream of seeing a flourishing population made energetic by the spur of economic progress, has not been realized, despite the boom of rice-production during the war-years. The fibre of the race is the issue at stake, and, after thirty years of effort, the average native seems as nonchalant and unprogressive as ever.

Undeterred by this deadening enervation which seems to creep over Malagasian affairs with the dreadful inexorability of a tropical forest encroaching on cleared land, the Government maintains its efforts, although it would appear that the peculiar lassitude which characterizes Polynesian races would prevent results similar to those achieved by the English on the Gold Coast and Nigeria and by the French themselves in West Africa, where economic prosperity, coupled with a tactfully applied spur in the form of "social force," has removed the racial *malaise*. In 1922, for instance, Governor-General Garbit attacked the problem again, for, without success in this direction, Madagascar clearly had to remain stagnant. During the war-years, when rice and manioc were wanted by France in larger and larger quantities, an element of exploitation had for the first time entered Malagasian native policy, because the determined heedlessness of the natives could not be pandered to at such a moment of crisis,—when production was the essential need. To prevent a continuance of this, Garbit set up a "Department of Native Affairs" and an advisory council for native matters, with a majority of Malagasian members. In addition, he admitted four natives to the administrative council of the colony and increased the number of native functionaries, the idea being both to provide a scope for the natives and to give them means of expressing their grievances. The time was ripe for a new sign of their visible co-partnership with the Government,—an important matter for a people having the natural Polynesian *flair* for political matters. At the same time, he arranged for a closer local supervision of the economic life of the tribesmen. A strict *régime* of contracts was instituted to eradicate the exploitation that had previously crept in; and commissions of labour were set up in each province, prescribing minimum wages and in general safeguarding the natives.<sup>54</sup> As a general inducement to progress, agricultural loans to peasant-proprietors are being contemplated

<sup>53</sup> *Annuaire Général du Madagascar*, 1921-1922, Vol. II, p. 270.

<sup>54</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, April 1922, p. 189.

(although the French colonial scheme in general is notoriously backward in providing credit-facilities, and Madagascar is no exception to this rule). In fact, the whole of the newer native policy, while rejecting both the idealistic attitude of Galliéni's time and the exploitation of the war-years, provides a limited avenue of progress for the natives, and sets up a closer supervision of their economic life, with the element of social constraint or judicially exercised force more prominent than before.

Yet these are in some degree measures of desperation,—last-hour attempts to inculcate a progressive spirit in a backward native stock in which the majority of administrators have little faith. The root-evil of the island is still the population problem, and, to Galliéni's plaint that "what lacks in our new possession is a sufficiently numerous population" has to be added "and a sufficiently vigorous population." The problem is both one of numbers and stamina, and, because the latter affects the numbers of the future, it is the centre of French efforts.<sup>55</sup>

As would be expected under these conditions, the actual development of Madagascar has been strictly limited. The land itself is not a unity, for its possibilities range from European crops on the central plateau to the sugar-cane and cotton of the western plains, and the rich humid crops like vanilla and cocoa and pepper in the east. But the unifying crops are rice and manioc and maize, which grow everywhere, except in the extreme south, and are the staples of the land. Madagascar is essentially a country of rice and manioc, and hence of small native growers, as the experience of Indo-China and elsewhere has eliminated all other methods of production in such cases. Conditions are such that the prosperity of the land must of necessity depend on these two native crops, and hence only a limited and very gradual development is possible.<sup>56</sup>

To the French, however, with their idea of colonies as regions to be exploited, this restraint was anathema, and, because they retained the psychology of the Dutch in the wealthy East Indies, and detested the idea of a colony where the tedious farming methods of France had to be duplicated, a period of restricted development marked the first years in Madagascar. This was partly caused by the failure of the various settlement-schemes, but mainly by the emphasis placed on the country's varied possibilities. The Europeans turned first to gold, and, in the early years of the century, gold-seekers flocked in on every boat, and even the comparatively settled natives like the Betsimisirakas deserted their rice-fields for the allurements of placer-mining.

This gave way to a rubber boom, and, for a time, Madagascar was viewed as a potential Congo ; but the unwise exploitation of wild rubber

<sup>55</sup> See Richard Report to *Congrès de l'Afrique Orientale*, 1912, p. 631.

<sup>56</sup> Jumelle Report on agriculture, in *ibid.*, p. 369.

by the natives soon razed the *massifs*, and by 1910, rubber exports had dwindled to insignificance. Not deterred by this, Europeans turned to the "rich tropical crops," the get-rich-quick-crops, and, by 1906, cocoa and vanilla and kindred cultures were the centre of attention. But these were clearly subsidiaries rather than the staples of the island, and, in a disgruntled kind of manner, France realized by the time of the crisis of 1905-1908 that the wealth of the land was in rice and meat—naturally a disappointment to those who had for years looked on Madagascar as a Java or Ceylon waiting for its wealth to be drawn from it. "The island must above all be a granary and a pastoral-station for South Africa and its own natives,"—that was its limited destiny, and the lesson of 1906 was as unpalatable as it was clear.<sup>57</sup>

The result of the disillusion was the crisis towards the end of Gallieni's time. This was aided by his neglect of economic development, a neglect made almost inevitable by his emphasis on native regeneration, and one accentuated by the policy of tariff-assimilation. Madagascar had been "assimilated" in 1897, and, at once, despite the extensive imports for public-works, trade commenced to decline. France secured the Malagasian market for herself, that could not be denied; but at the cost of stagnation. With one hand she limited that increase of trade which Gallieni, with the other, was offering to the Malagasians as the primal incentive for his scheme of economic development on their part.<sup>58</sup>

The final cause of the crisis was the sudden restriction of French efforts. In the ebullience of the early years, when Gallieni's "policy of races" seemed to have removed the native difficulty and opened this teeming tropical Eldorado for exploitation, France sanctioned a vigorous policy of public-works. Construction-materials poured in, trade received an artificial fillip, there was an increased demand for French goods, and the French manufacturers flooded the Malagasian markets. An economic structure altogether too large was erected, and Madagascar was clearly traversing a boom-period. The pricking of the bubble came when 15,000 men were suddenly taken from railway-construction, and the island swept back in a tide of pessimism as artificial and unjustified as the boom of 1896-1898 and the following years had been. Imports declined by 50 per cent. in 1904, and the crisis lasted for four years.<sup>59</sup> The result was that trade in 1906-1908 was less than it had been in 1900, and it

<sup>57</sup> Dondouau (1922), *op. cit.*, p. 206.

<sup>58</sup> July's Report, in *Compte Rendu des Travaux du Congrès Colonial de Marseille* (1906), Vol. II, p. 206; A. Artaud, *Introduction à la Révision du Régime Douanier des Colonies Françaises* (1925—report to Colonial Institute of Marseilles), p. 38; *Congrès du Régime Douanier Colonial*, Marseilles, 1925, p. 51 *et seq.*

<sup>59</sup> *Compte Rendu du Congrès de l'Afrique Orientale*, 1912, p. 245 *et seq.*; Messimy, *Notre Œuvre Coloniale* (1910), p. 239.



was not until 1916 that imports again approached the boom-level of 1901.

Madagascar thus received a salutary lesson on the subject of developing in unhealthy directions and at a forced rate, and, until the war-years, remained practically stagnant. The comparatively rapid development of 1909-1912 was followed by a marked depression in the next two years, and, on the whole, the country stood still, under the joint influence of an assimilated tariff and an unprogressive native population. To offset this, and to supplement the successful native policy by a developmental economic policy, Galliéni's successors, from Augagneur to Merlin (1905-1918), emphasized economic consolidation above all things. Augagneur in particular turned to the development of native agriculture and of railways, and attacked the problem of communications in earnest.

It was evident that, even given a desire to progress on the part of the natives, any such development depended on the extension of communications, especially in such a country of mountains and jungle. The economic life of Madagascar centred on the plateau of Antananarivo, the old Hova land, yet this was set far inland from the coast. Up to 1900 the only connection between the two was by man-back portage, with the "forest-fever,"—the *hazo-tazo* of native tradition,—keeping Emyrna in a practically isolated situation. Even Galliéni's carriage-road served only to reduce the cost of transport from Antananarivo to the coast from 1,300 francs a ton to 700 francs, and clearly a railway was called for. After considerable hesitation between the eastern and western projects, the French Parliament in April, 1900, sanctioned a loan of 60 million francs, 48 million of which were to go for the railway.<sup>60</sup> This was finally opened in 1913, and (termed "the rice-railway") was quite as important as the Dakar-St. Louis line ("the groundnut railway") had been in Senegal in changing the semi-desert of Cayor and revolutionizing the position and outlook of the natives. This development continued, and at present there are three railways with a mileage of 430; but the country still stands in need of communication.<sup>61</sup> It has only 1,346 miles of metalled roads, and, although the scarcity is not as important as it would have been had economic development been more rapid and the transformation of native life more extensive, it still imposes an almost impassable barrier on development. At the very least, it sets a limit which cannot be passed.

The development of Madagascar thus remains restricted, as the

<sup>60</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 24/3/1900; Senate, 15/4/1900. Report in *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1900, p. 16, or *Journal Officiel*, Deps., doct. parl., sess. ext., 1899, p. 461.

<sup>61</sup> *Compte Rendu du Congrès de l'Afrique Orientale*, 1912, p. 595 et seq.

following table shows, especially if account be taken of depreciation :—

	IMPORTS. (Millions of Francs.)	EXPORTS. \$
1896 . . . .	—	3·605—Galliéni's arrival.
1900 . . . .	40·469	10·623—beginning of public-works.
1905 . . . .	31·196	22·850—Galliéni left : crisis.
1910 . . . .	33·436	45·348—period of restricted prosperity.
1913 . . . .	46·747	56·054—a bad year.
1915 . . . .	43·766	66·066
1916 . . . .	101·954	85·015—rise due to rice-exports.
1917 . . . .	136·769	86·207
1918 . . . .	102·268	91·782
1919 . . . .	98·972	177·167—franc at 35 to £1
1920 . . . .	279·694	285·942 „ „ 50 „ world crisis.
1921 . . . .	225·921	108·308 „ „ 62·5 „ local crisis.
1922 . . . .	173·831	132·472 „ „ 62·5 „ „ „
1923 . . . .	209·818	191·840 „ „ 75 „ „ „
1924 . . . .	259·033	387·571 „ „ 88 „

There is nothing remarkable about this table <sup>62</sup> : on the contrary, with a country comparatively free from droughts and other natural obstacles, and with established staples, it implies restriction. It is true that the development had been consistent and firmly based, even if limited, and that, to obtain a fair perspective, the new position has to be compared with that pertaining under the Hovas. For instance, in 1901–1902, all of the northern Sakalavas, in an essentially rice-growing province, were living on rice imported from Indo-China ; a few years later, the region not only fed itself but had become a rice-exporting country : and this transformation, little sign of which appears in the trade-lists, was but typical of what was happening in some degree all over Madagascar, especially when the demand of the war-years gave a fillip to the export of rice and the much-needed manioc with its hard fibre. Madagascar's position thus remains one of compensations. The development, if limited, has been natural and guarantees the future stability of the country, although at the same time making unlikely any sudden or extensive increases. It also follows that Madagascar's financial position has always been sound and that the colony, when hit by the world-crisis of 1920 and the currency-depreciation, could not only withstand the four bad years but, by 1924, could recover its equilibrium and even obtain a favourable trade-balance. Like Indo-China and West Africa, and unlike Algeria, the country is in an essentially sound position, even if in a comparatively small way.

<sup>62</sup> See graphs in Dondouau (1922), *op. cit.*, p. 232, or statistics in *Congrès de l'Afrique Orientale*, 1912, p. 233.

At present 35 per cent. of the country's exports are of rice and hides and 40 per cent. of the imports cotton-goods, the other items being subsidiary to these staples. The French have undoubtedly secured their end of monopolizing the country's trade, as they control 87 per cent. of the imports and 88 per cent. of the exports, these proportions being uniform over a number of years. But, in view of the proximity of the South African market and the natural attachment of this island to the mainland, such a restriction is obviously artificial, and, by attaching Madagascar to a market 7,000 miles away, imposes heavy financial burdens on her, and in addition, a handicap on her possible development, although it is impossible to estimate to what extent this is so.

As a distinct change from the relative stagnation of Malagasian production for two decades, the recent move west is one of the most important economic events that the island has known.<sup>63</sup> Hitherto, the central plateau absorbed most attention, although a lesser effort was made to develop the relatively peopled sections along the east coast. This was an attempt to bring the cultures to the people, despite the fact that the land in question is mediocre. But, with the advance of French knowledge of the island, it was realized that the future of Madagascar lay in the west, the less peopled half of the island, with fewer than two persons to the square kilometre, and with the huge Morondara province inhabited only by rapidly disappearing Sakalavas, who were making no attempt to orientate themselves towards the changing demands of existence, but were simply giving way. Once attention was diverted from the illusory "rich cultures" which were possible in certain regions of the east, and once it was realized that Madagascar was a land of rice and cattle, it became clear that, for purposes of future development, Madagascar meant the west. This was a vast region, a third the size of France, with three distinct belts of plain, separated by practically desert spaces. Two of them already had natural outlets at Majunga and Tolear, and a third, for the largest and most important plain, was starting near the Tsiribihina delta. This was "quite another world," distinct from the *hauts plateaux* of the east; and here, where a native could produce thrice as much as in the centre and where the easier conditions of life make a healthy race more prolific, was emptiness. The land waited for the taking. In times gone by, the warrior Sakalavas had kept the west a closed field of endless war, and thus shut off from the eastern Malagasians, but now the erstwhile pillagers were giving way with a frightful rapidity, —doomed, because the spark of vitality had gone from the race, and because it lacked the power of adapting itself to a quiet farming life.

The result was that the vigorous stocks of the south and north and

<sup>63</sup> Dondouau (1922), *op. cit.*, pp. 207, 234 *et seq.* See Map on p. 409 for migrations.

east have been concentrating on this land of promise for almost twenty years, and especially in the past decade.<sup>64</sup> The claims of an easier life attract the heedless masses, while the possibilities of advancement draw the energetic coastal-dwellers of the east and the mountaineers of the south. From six directions, therefore, a vast human migration has been taking place and is displacing the centre of gravity in Malagasian life. The Baras, twenty years ago all south of the Mangoky River, are already up to the Tsiribihina, that is, the centre of the island, and their onrush over the plains is unchecked. The Betsileos from the central plateau, traditionally quiet agriculturists, are coming down all over the west, and the Antaimorana, in whose east-coast home there are almost ten persons to the square kilometre, are crossing the roof of the island. In the north the Antandrana and Betsimisirakas have invaded all of Analalava province and most of Majunga, and penetrate south to effect a junction with the Baras coming north. Both the tribal and economic positions are being radically changed, and the important feature of the move is that the very migration and the energetic movement and competition do more to induce that progressive state of mind aimed at in Galliéni's native programme than all the measures of "social force" could do, when applied to a listless population remaining immobile and unprogressive in their traditional eastern homes. The migration means the spur of change and the removal in part of the hampering web of tradition; and, with natives as with everybody, the occupation of a virgin land and the carving-out of new provinces must mean a more energetic outlook, and, with a people like the Malagasians, a blow to their psychology of drift and despair. In this manner, Madagascar's displacement to the west means racial revival as well as economic health, and so island affairs in every way are coming more and more to centre on the *mise en valeur* of the west,—with the labour and irrigation and communication questions that of necessity are involved.

#### IV. Conclusion

Madagascar in these ways adds a distinctive element to the history of French colonization,—the transformation of a country in a few years and the permanent winning-over of what was formerly a bear-pit of some twenty quarrelling native races, to whom ideas of progress and co-operation were entirely foreign. Galliéni's "policy of races" produced this change and became the accepted colonial policy in this connection,—as Tonkin and South Algeria, West Africa and Morocco, especially the last-mentioned, were all to know. This island exerted a very real influence on the colonies and on colonial policy in general,

<sup>64</sup> *Compte Rendu du Congrès de l'Afrique Orientale*, 1912, p. 415, for motion favouring it.

especially by transforming the hitherto vague "protectorate" policy, which was becoming construed more and more as simply meaning abstention, into a definite policy of "the collaboration of races,"—the theory of "association" in its practical form.

It may be argued that this success was dearly bought and that France paid for it by the relative stagnation of Madagascar's economic development, but it must be remembered that the limitations of the country and the shackles imposed on development by the system of tariff-assimilation were certainly more immediate, and possibly far more important, causes of that stagnation. Even so, however, the question arises as to whether a spectacular but artificial economic advance, as in the case of Algeria, is preferable to the slow and secure growth of Madagascar: and the lessons of the crisis of 1920–1924 would seem to make the choice clear. Notwithstanding the firmness of Malagasian advance, however, and taking into account the physical nature of the country, it is clear that development has been unduly slow and limited; and it becomes a further moot point whether an advance, however firmly consolidated, may be called successful, if it does not represent the greatest possible exploitation that would have been warranted by the nature of the country's possibilities. On the other hand, the opening of the west, and the greater freedom which this implies for the natives remaining in the east, would seem to be a possible transforming factor, both as regards the native temperament and the colony's future, and it can certainly be said that, despite the unusual test of the post-war crisis, Madagascar is in a sound condition for such an experiment.

In all, then, Madagascar was perhaps the greatest native success of the French, although less successful in modernizing and rejuvenating the native temperament than in evolving a harmonious policy. Economically, development has been stable if limited, and, by a somewhat painful process of trial-and-error, has come to limit itself to those fields of development that afford future opportunity. Development has been limited to the natives, and to ordinary farming-pursuits in preference to the richer plantation-cultures; and the west has been called into being to destroy the unwonted emphasis hitherto placed on the central plateau. But, after all, the question of Madagascar's economic development is not the important issue in French colonial policy: it is the Galliéni tradition and the "policy of races" that made Madagascar so conspicuous a French success, and an interesting study, not only in French colonization, but in the wider history of comparative colonial methods. In this regard, Madagascar is one of the outstanding successes of European colonization in general,—a seminary for the inculcation of new views on native policy;—and therein lies its importance.

## CHAPTER XI

### INDO-CHINA

ONE of the greatest mysteries in French colonization is the present undoubted leadership of Indo-China. "From all points of view," summed up Sarraut, "this is the most important, the most developed, and the most prosperous of our colonies,"<sup>1</sup>—a position that is the more remarkable in view of the dismal record of failures in the early years. Yet it could easily be understood why the early policies should have been inapplicable. The problem afforded by Indo-China was very complex and quite new,—indeed, it had nothing in common with France's African problems. Its complexity was undoubted. There was a large homogeneous population, linked by one civilization and singularly hostile to new cultural influences: yet they were so split up into rival native kingdoms that all the French could do was to lump five dissimilar States into a loose union. Organization under these conditions was practically out of the question, and, to make matters worse, there were certain complicating features from outside. Constant diplomatic issues arose with other Powers, and the rich deltas of Indo-China saw a continual infiltration of inimical elements from China and Siam. Local circumstances thus exerted a considerable influence on policy, and, when it is added that this colony was the particular playing-ground of French theorists, the difficulties of control will be obvious.

The policy occasioned by these conditions was in many ways remarkable,—not least in the radical difference between its two forms. In the first stage, everything was based on assimilation, and this involved the destruction of native cultures; but, in the second, the more liberal teaching of Paul Bert and de Lanessan bore fruit, and it was recognized that Indo-China had to evolve in the light of its own past. This change of emphasis came in 1897, and explains both the failure before that date and the success after it. It also explains the anomalous nature of Indo-Chinese organization to-day,—why Cochinchina, for instance, is a totally assimilated colony and why the northern States are only protectorates, with the natives still largely governing themselves and masters of their own cultural future. Cochinchina had the misfortune to be the first

<sup>1</sup> A. Sarraut, *La Mise en Valeur des Colonies Françaises* (1923), p. 463.

part of the peninsula to come under French influence, hence its organization dated from the eighties, and everything native was so completely uprooted that it could not, as in Tonkin, ultimately predominate over the extraneous French ideas. Tonkin's stand, however, swung the pendulum in the opposite direction, and, coupled with metropolitan indifference or hostility in the nineties, decided that the rest of the Indo-Chinese union should be organized loosely, with a considerable scope left for native development,—a trend reinforced at a later date by the rise of the *association* theory in France.

The turning-point of 1897 also explains the difference between French methods here and in Africa. Of course, it is impossible to generalize in this connection. As has been pointed out, the present organization of Indo-China is made anomalous by the position of Cochin-China as an assimilated colony, and the influence of the period before 1897 is continually cropping up: but, on the whole, Indo-China may be judged by the policy since Doumer's arrival in that year. So too with Africa. Tunisia and the more recent policy of *association*, as organized in West Africa and Morocco, may be put aside, and Algeria and the pre-war stage in general taken as expressing the conventional French policy there,—so far as there was one. If France's African and Asiatic policies are limited to essentials in this way, it is seen that they are completely different. Africa meant to France the triumph of annexationist ideas and the destruction of native kingdoms, whereas Indo-China, after the experiment of Cochin-China, came to stand for a Protectorate, with native institutions surviving as the means of government. The typical French form in Africa was thus a directly annexed colony; in Asia, rule through associated native powers. This in turn meant that the French policy was direct rule in the former, indirect rule in the latter; or, in other words, the destruction of native government in Africa, but in Asia rule on the old Annamite-Chinese model,—through a mandarin or *litrati* class, with all the un-French orientation that this implied. The one saw emphasis on the French point of view, the other on the native. That is to say, collaboration rather than assimilation was the aim in Indo-China, at least after 1897. As far as the natives were concerned, this different emphasis involved social disruption for the Africans, with all of the repercussions that this meant on temperament and modes of life and thought, but social continuation for the Asiatics,—or what this meant under the circumstances, a large degree of social immobility.

Following these fundamental differences between African and Asiatic policy were certain lesser ones, which were tendencies rather than facts, quite opposite in each case. Because of the emphasis on native destruction and assimilation, French efforts in Africa tended to become

primarily governmental, but, with these matters reduced to lesser importance in Asia, France turned in the first place to economic development. That is why the transformation of Indo-China has been so noticeable and continuous since 1897. As a corollary of this came the French attempt to obtain a monopoly in the commerce of her African colonies, but a recognition that her Asiatic possessions were destined by nature for local Oriental markets. In general, that is, the centripetal idea was triumphant in Africa, the centrifugal tendency in French Asia, with the differences that this implied in every department.

But it is easy to overdraw such a contrast in colonial methods, and it must be remembered that French Asia and French Africa formed one whole in the determination of the colonial policy of Paris. That means that Africa determined the early assimilation-experiments in Cochin-China and Tonkin, that Tunisia and the force of circumstances led to the later policy of a protectorate, and that, in turn, this *association* idea spread outwards from Indo-China through Madagascar to French North Africa; and thus African and Asiatic policies tend to-day to be united on an *association* basis.

Yet, despite this continual interaction and essential unity of French policy, and despite the turning-point of Indo-China in 1897 and the newer policies in Africa, the basic differences of emphasis remain as important factors in the situation. They account both for differences of organization and for the different position of each set of colonies at the present time. Indeed, it might be asserted that, had it not been for this difference of emphasis, there would have been no reason why Indo-China should have forced itself to the front so spectacularly: with it, on the other hand, the Indo-Chinese Union easily recovered from the inapplicable policies of the first years and built up a record that is unequalled in French colonization.

### I. The Preliminary Stage (to 1885)

As with her other colonies, France successfully raked history for proofs of her interest in Indo-China,—a process that could be used to justify the annexation of Jerusalem or the Cannibal Islands, and the main point of which seemed to be that the claims in question were always concerned with declining native Powers! France undoubtedly had early claims in Indo-China. Her voyagers and missionaries had been there since 1625: her officers had built forts for the Annamese at the close of the eighteenth century: Guizot held that her trading rights there justified annexation, several Annamite ports were opened to her in 1841—and the peninsula lay athwart the main route to the Orient!

Napoleon III therefore sent a fleet in 1859 to take Saigon, the port at



the delta of the Mekong in Cochin-China, and, as in Algeria, the French, once there, could not withdraw. For a time, all of the customary procrastinations and *volte-faces* of French colonial policy came to bear on the situation,—what Jules Harmand termed “the most singular and astonishing ideas.” Everything was confusion in the first six years, the only plain fact being that France wanted to withdraw. But this was the one thing that she could not do under the circumstances, especially when the treaty of 1862 gave her the three lower provinces of Cochin-China in full ownership. Napoleon *did* almost withdraw in 1865, but, two years later, events forced him to accept three more provinces; and already in 1863, de Lagrée had set up a protectorate over Cambodia, which was a decadent fragment under Siam. In this desultory and confused manner, France obtained the colony of Cochin-China and the protectorate of Cambodia almost despite herself. Incidentally, although she did not know it, she secured the trade-outlet of all the interior, even up to the provinces of South China.<sup>2</sup>

By the late sixties, tendencies had become more unified and efficient by reason of the trading impetus. France wanted to tap the China trade and held that all of the southern provinces could be made economic dependencies of the Indo-Chinese peninsula, looking south rather than east to the China Sea. This corner of Asia would thus mean a number of economic influences coming from the interior and centring on Cochin-China, which, fortunately for the new theory, began to flourish. With a densely populated delta and a rice-staple, Cochin-China was naturally one of the rich regions of the world. As early as 1867, that is, before the conquest of the second three provinces, its budget already showed a profit of a million francs. Indeed, it was the only French colony sending money to the mother-land at this time, and so France looked kindly on this colonial prodigy. Moreover, it accorded well with the rather hazily adventurous outlook of the Second Empire to consider an awakening Cathay at the feet of the French throne: and, while this won over the Court and the people, the influence of the Marseilles Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of the Marine secured the interest of the traders. By 1866, therefore, France was full of the idea of entering China by this back-door and diverting the channel of economic development so that it would become the main entrance.

The Ministry of the Marine sent naval officers to explore the Mekong, in a hope that trade could come directly south from Szechuan to Saigon. In 1866–1868 Doudart de Lagrée, the most romantic figure in the early

<sup>2</sup> Documents in J. Ferry, *Le Tonkin et la Mère-Patrie* (1890 edition), pp. 58–69; a fuller account in P. Cultru, *Histoire de la Cochinchine française des origines à 1883* (1910), or P. Vial, *Les Premières Années de la Cochinchine* (1874).

years in the peninsula, ascended the river for the first time. It is a significant commentary on the emphasis on China at the time that Murchison, the President of the Royal Geographical Society in London, said that this was the most important expedition of the nineteenth century! Yet all that Lagrée really did was to go from the mouth of the Mekong to Seou-Cheou on the Yangtse and incidentally to dash the French hopes that Cochin-China could be made an outlet of West China. He demonstrated that the river could not possibly be this artery and that it was impracticable to develop the point.<sup>3</sup>

France, undaunted by this rebuff, continued her explorations of Yunnan, for it must be remembered that the Orient was viewed at this time as Africa was a little later,—as the future pivot of the world's economics and as spelling world-power for the nations securing predominance there. The economic penetration of Yunnan was France's goal, and, even in an anti-colonial age, the wisdom of this move was scarcely questioned, as it was deemed to concern trade but not colonization.

Gradually, it was perceived that Tonkin and not Cochin-China might be Yunnan's link to the sea and the portal of South China. Interest therefore deserted the Mekong for the Red River, and left Saigon for Hanoi. There were the same extravagant hopes, the same imaginary advantages. "This river will one day turn most of the riches of Western China to a French port," wrote the Vicomte de Carné, one of the de Lagrée mission<sup>4</sup>: and Dupuis, a trader who had been in China since 1855 and who was obsessed by the idea of the southern outlet, commenced his series of explorations in 1871. He brought metals down from China to Hanoi in nine days, proving the practicability of the connection beyond the possibility of doubt. Thus he confirmed the deductions of the de Lagrée mission by actual experience, at the same time giving a fillip to the situation by revealing the mineral wealth of Yunnan.<sup>5</sup>

By this time everything was ready for French action. Tonkin was obviously more densely peopled and had a greater commerce than Cochin-China, and Dupuis's flat-bottomed boats had shown that it was the road to China. All in all, France's interest in Indo-China was shifting north. Then, too, England's activities dispelled any lingering doubts that France may have retained on the subject. The English papers published even more than the French about Dupuis's expeditions, and saw in the Red River the link from China through Burma to India. England was

<sup>3</sup> Report of Doudart de Lagrée in *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris), June, 1880.

<sup>4</sup> Vicomte de Carné, *Voyage en Indo-Chine et dans l'Empire Chinoise* (1869), or de Kergaradec, *Rapport sur la première reconnaissance du fleuve du Tonkin* (1876-1877)—report by French Consul at Hanoi.

<sup>5</sup> J. Dupuis, *Les Origines de la Question du Tonkin* (1896).

trying to secure the connection through Burma, and, between 1865 and 1889, made at least eleven important expeditions in the Burma-Chinese region, the idea being to attract the trade of West China to either Calcutta or Rangoon, instead of to Hanoi. England had hitherto been the arbiter of Chinese trade from the east, and London had been practically the sole intermediary between China and Europe: hereafter, wrote François Garnier, the second in command of the de Lagrée mission, Hanoi would give the French at least independence, and possibly more.<sup>6</sup>

Therefore, when the Annamite mandarins and the Yunnan Viceroy raised obstacles in Dupuis's path, France eagerly intervened. The Garnier mission was sent in 1873 to settle these disputes, study the general situation, negotiate a favourable tariff, and secure a right of exploiting the mines of Yunnan. It was a trade mission, but with the understanding that political action was not far behind. But the recalcitrance of the natives, real or supposed, led Garnier to take Hanoi and to occupy the Delta region himself. This, however, was overstepping the mark. The zealots on the spot were forgetting that this was 1873, that colonization was treason in Paris, and that France wanted from the Orient not obligations, but only riches that would strengthen her for her fight on the Rhine. They had blundered in converting a trade matter into a colonial one, and thus ruined their cause. France wanted to open four of the richest Chinese provinces, but the establishment of a new colony was not once contemplated. The Duc de Broglie, the head of the anti-colonials, therefore stopped the conquest of Tonkin, and the Treaty of Saigon, in March, 1874, was practically an evacuation. The independence of the land was recognized, and, although the river and certain ports remained open, France had to all intents and purposes given up. The steady work of economic penetration, spread consistently over twenty years though it had been, was abruptly stopped. Parisian anti-colonialism, aided by a meaningless distinction between commerce and colonization, had triumphed once more.<sup>7</sup>

Yet the matter could not be disposed of so simply, as the very logic of facts kept the French there. Events in the next decade moved steadily in the direction of annexation. French explorers worked in the back-country of Laos and Annam, there were reconnaissances for mining and railway purposes, the Chinese merchants in Yunnan worked for an outlet down to Tonkin, and the chief Chambers of Commerce in France

<sup>6</sup> See important article of F. Garnier ("Des Nouvelles Routes de Commerce avec la Chine") in *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* (Paris), Jan. 1872; or documents in Ferry (1890), *op. cit.*, pp. 97, 233.

<sup>7</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 2/8/1874, or *Livre Jaune, Affaires du Tonkin*, 1885. The treaties are in full in Du Clercq, Vol. XI, p. 144.

ordered a report on trade possibilities (1885).<sup>8</sup> European commerce definitely started by this Red River route in 1883, and by 1885, there was a practical agreement of opinion in France on two points—that the Tonkin route might serve to break the hold of Canton and Hong-Kong and admit France directly to Chinese raw materials ; and that an immense wealth lay hidden in these regions and could be made available by using the dense population. Nor was there any doubt that all of these advantages would fall to France, for a ton of goods cost only 450 francs to go up the Red River to Yunnan, while the cheapest alternative route, that of the Yangtse, cost 880 !<sup>9</sup> What could be clearer ?

Trading opportunities thus caused France to intervene once more, despite her hostility to new colonial ventures. A sufficient pretext was afforded by Tonkin's turn to China in the early eighties, although it is not clear what was the heinous offence implied in this turn. The truth was that the treaty of 1874, dubiously worded as it was, had caused endless trouble. France had purposely refrained from mentioning a protectorate in it, because her idea was to evacuate the land ; but, when later events made interference desirable, she claimed that the treaty *implicitly* set up a protectorate, even if it did not directly say so. The treaty was undoubtedly vague and obscure on the political side, and a protectorate could be read into it or denied at will. France had simply promised to protect Annam and had recognized the country's independence : and clearly this was not a protectorate.

Faced by French encroachments, the Emperor of Annam turned towards China, and the position became most involved. Annam owned Tonkin, China claimed to own Annam or at least be its suzerain, and France was reading new meanings into the treaty of 1874. To provide some tangible issue, the famous *Héki*s or "Black Flags," the remnants of the Taiping rebels, occupied Upper Tonkin and, with local auxiliaries, became known as the so-called "pirates" who were the most formidable opponents of the French for twenty years. The diplomacy of Annam was remarkable. The Emperor deliberately revived the old Chinese rights over his country and appealed to Peking for protection, the result being the sending of Chinese regulars to the north. At the same time, to make the situation interesting, he appealed to France for reinforcements, under the terms of the treaty of 1874, and then left both sides to settle the issue. The French were soon hemmed in to Hanoi and Haiphong, and the Emperor kept on aiding both sides. Grand Guignol had again left the Rue Chaptal to assume its rôle in the French colonial sphere ! Perhaps the most delightful manifestation of all was the diplomacy of the Chinese Minister in Paris, Marquis Tseng, who effectively

<sup>8</sup> In *Journal Officiel*, 12/2/85.

<sup>9</sup> Ferry (1890), *op. cit.*, p. 234.

dallied with Gambetta and confused the situation so that nobody could understand it.<sup>10</sup>

The French, confronted by this maze, seized upon two factors and isolated them from the remainder. The Emperor Tu-Duc of Annam had deliberately connived at bringing the Chinese to Tonkin, and "Black Flags" and Chinese irregulars were in occupation of Upper Tonkin. "If France does not wish to renounce all influence in the Extreme Orient," reported Patenôtre, the French *chargé d'affaires* in China, in 1880, "it is absolutely necessary to bring a prompt remedy to this situation, which is daily becoming worse."<sup>11</sup> Therefore, Commandant Rivière was sent in January, 1882, to expel the intruders from the mountains of Tonkin.<sup>12</sup> Curiously enough, this did not involve war with China, but with Annam! The "Black Flags" were Chinese, but it was Annam who had enlisted them. The situation was most exasperating, and Gambetta had all his Meridional impetuosity set on end by Tseng's suave complications. Fortunately for the French politicians, the issue was solved by Rivière's death,—on the same Papier bridge on which Garnier had met his fate! This at once simplified matters. Was France for ever to be halted at this point? And when Rivière had been the idol of the masses after his conduct in the New Caledonian revolt of four years before? France, once aroused, cared little about anti-colonialism or facts or difficulties. She did not know whether she was fighting China or Annam, or both, but somebody had to be smashed on the Red River. Rivière and France had to be avenged, and no "Black Flag" savages could beard the tricolour any longer. Credits were instantly rushed through,<sup>13</sup> and France went feverishly towards the conquest of Tonkin. The whole episode was especially instructive as to the motives determining French colonial policy, and, if coupled with the subsequent collapse, may be taken as a complete embodiment of the French colonial process.

There was no vagueness now. Jules Harmand was sent as Civil Commissioner, Hué was bombarded, and a treaty of August, 1883, gave "a full and complete recognition of the protectorate." Although four months had elapsed, Parliament was still overwhelmingly in support of the policy,<sup>14</sup> and, even in December, Ferry received a majority of 210 in summing up French policy in Tonkin and showing that it was the best

<sup>10</sup> For Chinese position, see Marquis Tseng-St. Hilaire, 27/12/80, and Gambetta-Tseng, 1/1/82, in *Livre Jaune, Affaires du Tonkin*, 1885, or Dubois et Terrier (1902), *op. cit.*, p. 849 *et seq.*

<sup>11</sup> Patenôtre, French *chargé d'affaires* in China, to de Freycinet, 5/5/80, in *Les Affaires du Tonkin*, 1885, or Dubois et Terrier (1902), *op. cit.*, p. 845.

<sup>12</sup> His instructions are in Dubois et Terrier (1902), p. 853.

<sup>13</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 25/1/83.

<sup>14</sup> See interpellation in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 11/7/83. The voting was 362 to 78.

instance of colonial solidarity France had known.<sup>15</sup> Parliament, for some incredible reason, stood firm; and so the Treaty of Tientsin in May, 1884, stipulated for a complete Chinese evacuation of Tonkin, while a Treaty of Hué in June finalized the pacification with Annam and set up a firmer protectorate over Cambodia.<sup>16</sup> By 1884, France thus had one colony and three well-defined protectorates in Indo-China, and, wonderful to relate in the history of French colonization, there had been a consistent majority of over 200 for an aggressive colonial policy for fourteen whole months! Everything seemed finished; Ferry was still the master of the Houses, and had successfully steered France over the longest colonial crisis that had yet arisen. The French name had been absolved from its stain, Garnier and Rivière avenged, and Tonkin bade fair to go down the ages as one of the Republic's most spectacular triumphs,—when news came of an ambushade of French troops at Bac-Lé (June 23, 1884).

Quite illogically, France had reached the apex of her colonial ecstasy, now, equally as unjustifiably, she swept down to its nadir. This meant a war with China, and the Deputies, though thrice voting credits,<sup>17</sup> were plainly irritated by the reopening of the question, and then by the length of the war and the constant reverses. The tedious events dragged on for nine months, Ferry's unpopularity increasing the while, and Clemenceau's constant attacks sapping the Ministry's resistance and tautening the nerves of the country. It was this protracted strain and feeling of frustration that alone explained the panic of March, 1885. As was inevitable, the French by this time were asserting their superiority in the Orient, and negotiations with the Chinese were proceeding favourably in the hands of Sir J. Duncan-Campbell. Once more, an ending seemed in sight, when there came to Paris a despatch of General Brière de l'Isle announcing a defeat at Lang-Son and containing the alarmist statement that "Whatever happens, I hope to be able to hold all the Delta,"—an attitude clearly uncalled for by the facts. Lang-Son was an unimportant skirmish in itself; the Delta was not threatened, nor yet the country beyond it; and the incident should have had no effect on the general situation. But the despatch exactly coincided with the mood of Paris at the moment. The Commune spirit was again in the air and the Parisians looked round for something tangible to rend,—they could not tear Tonkin to bits beneath their feet, but they had to do something. Filled with panic, they wanted to kill, but lacked a victim. Why, Ferry,—*le Tonkinois*, he who was as bad an enemy of France

<sup>15</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 31/10/83, 11/12/83; Senate, 21/12/83.

<sup>16</sup> In Du Clercq, Vol. XIV, pp. 374, 382.

<sup>17</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 16/8/84, 22/10/84, 27/11/84.

as the "Black Flags," the murderer of Rivière, the man responsible for Bac-Lé and now Lang-Son! "*À mort Ferry*," "*Ferry le Traître*,"—the hoarse cries reverberated in the clammy air of a Paris June, and the crowds swarmed across the bridges and down from the Place de la Concorde to the Palais-Bourbon,—where within, the panic was just as pronounced and far more degrading than outside the iron railings, because the Deputies were at least sentient individuals and lacked the excuse of mob-psychology.

The hubbub beggared description, and culminated in Clemenceau's unjustified accusation of high treason against the Cabinet. Clemenceau was on many occasions forced to dubious practices and rewarded with popular plaudits, but he was never more popular, never more despicable, than at this moment.<sup>18</sup> Ferry could not answer without betraying official secrets and could only appeal to his adversaries on the scores of his known integrity and the wisdom of delaying judgment on their part. But, as the mob was incapable of appreciating the first and was ignorant of judgment in any form, his appeals availed little. He fell, and it was clearly realized—and this afforded the spice of the situation to the cynics and the humorists in that bear-pit—that, while Lang-Son was a fitting fireworks to keep the mobs aroused outside, the voting within the Chamber, though nominally on a colonial issue, was determined almost entirely by Ferry's recent anti-clerical acts and severe measures against the Communist spirit.

On the 28th, Ferry's majority was down to fifty<sup>19</sup>: two days later, he was in a minority of 306 to 149: and, at any stage, he could have saved himself by telling of the peace which was even then being finalized.<sup>20</sup> His resignation was thus a conscious self-annihilation for the good of his country,—“the supreme honour of his life of pride and self-abnegation.” On the very day of his fall Sir Robert Hart sent the dispatch announcing the nearness of peace, and, four days after the Deputies had stigmatized him a traitor and the crowds had attacked his carriage, the peace for which he had been working for months was signed, and China recognized the French protectorate in Tonkin.

Tonkin was thus back to the stage of the first Treaty of Tientsin, but with every premise of the situation given a different value. Before, the country had been popular in France and viewed as one of the Republic's most obvious triumphs: now, its very name was an insult, and Ton-

<sup>18</sup> His speech is in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 31/3/85. For opposition, see A. Rambaud, *Jules Ferry* (1903), pp. 363, 364.

<sup>19</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 29/3/85. Voting was 259 to 209.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Deps., 31/3/85. See 1/4/05 for vote of 50 instead of 200 million francs. The Treaty is in Du Clercq, Vol. XIV, p. 496.

kin sounded as bad as Sedan to French ears,—and the actual policy was determined by this feeling for at least twelve years. Tonkin was damned by the events of 1885, and France would have none of it. Ferry and Tonkin had revived the bitterness of 1870, and the psychology of defeat; and both were enemies of France. Accordingly the colony was detested by the great mass of the French and doubly detested by that minority which, realizing the mistake of March 30th, and ashamed of the degradation of Paris and Parliament, hated to be reminded of their degradation, and transferred their rancour to the cause of the whole situation.

By such curious means, the French came almost to gloat on Tonkin's failures in the next few years, their warped psychology seeing in these failures some measure of their own vindication. It is quite obvious how illogicality has been said to be the dominant *motif* in French colonization and how the apostles of emotion as against reason found a congenial soil in France. The Tonkin episode was in 1885: in 1889 Bergson published his first apologia for intuition, and the Naturalists were unreservedly plighting their literary troth to instinct. *Tonkinois!* The very word, with the biting contumely associated with it, tells the whole tale of French colonization and French temperament in these decades, and it was not until the Dreyfus case in 1894 that the passionate relegation of Tonkin to a special niche of bitterness was over. Even then, the aftermath was long felt, even as late as the attacks on Klobukowski's rule in Indo-China in 1910. *Revanche*, Tonkin, Boulanger, Panama, Dreyfus, *l'âme nègre*,—the French spirit has many sides, but withal a striking consistency, and it needs no elaboration to show how this directly influenced colonization and why French colonial efforts were always subject to influences that pertained in the case of no other Power.

After this emotional crisis and the long anti-climax that followed, the Indo-Chinese possessions, under a cloud though they were, slowly rounded themselves off, hindered at every stage by the passive or active opposition of France. In December, 1885, for instance, it was only after three days of discussion and recrimination that a credit of 50 million francs was voted, and even then only by a vote of 173 to 167, and to meet far larger contingencies! <sup>21</sup>

Under these conditions the completion of the conquest was an unduly protracted process. For twelve years, continuous campaigns had to be directed against the "pirates" or pillagers, who, sheltered in their mountain-gorges, were supported by the sedentary populations in resisting the French. It was not until 1890, that even the Delta was pacified,

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Deps., 25/12/85. "Procès-verbaux de la commission parlementaire des crédits du Tonkin" (Report and annexes), in *Journal Officiel*, 20/7/86.



and only then could the inland mountain-regions be attacked. The long struggle, however, at least provided a striking laboratory for the rising school of colonial administrators. It was here that Galliéni, for instance, evolved his "policy of races" in pacifying Cao-Bang province and organizing the land up to the Chinese border (1893-1894). Perhaps it was an outcome of the newer methods of collaboration thus emphasized that, when the last big rebel-chief was subdued in 1894, he was made a Resident,—probably on the score that precisely those attributes which had made him a successful bandit could, if diverted in other directions, be used equally as well for the pursuance of State purposes!

By 1897 France thus had Cochin-China as a colony and the rest of the peninsula as protectorates, and she was again looking outwards. Attention had turned to the south once more, especially after France had begun to sulk on the Tonkin question. Just as twenty years before, the Mekong River had been forced into the background before the claims of Tonkin and the Red River, so now, in the nineties, the progress of fluvial navigation combined with the unpopularity of the north to turn interest to Cochin-China and the Mekong, and thus to the rounding-off of the western frontier-lands. Here, since 1884, France had had rights over the Shan States and the Mekong valley, but, in the years after 1887, Siam had deliberately pushed eastwards and come to control Annam, menacing even Vinh on the coast. In 1893, Annam was thus reduced to a narrow strip between the mountains and the sea, Tonkin was menaced, and all the Mekong was abandoned to the Siamese. The French had to force the invaders back over the river, and, in 1893, despite England's obstruction, wrested from them all the rich territory between the Annamite mountains and the rivers. This permitted the organization of Laos two years later, and made Indo-China a connected block of land instead of what the natives called "a sack of rice at each end of a long stick,"—that is, Cochin-China and Tonkin separated by the thin Annamite coast.<sup>22</sup>

With this rounding-off, France could once more turn to the question of the South Chinese market,—that issue which had hitherto given coherence to her Indo-Chinese policy and without which, it might safely be said, she would probably never have gone beyond Cochin-China. The capture of this trade was for the time being the main aim of French diplomacy in the Orient, and France seized various opportunities throughout the nineties to extend Tonkin's sphere of influence northwards.

<sup>22</sup> Livre Jaune, *Affaires du Siam*, 1893-1901 (1901), or Seauve, *Les Relations de la France avec le Siam*, 1880-1907 (1908). The incident is best related in the debates in *Journal Officiel*, Dets., 25/2/96, 28/2/96, especially the speeches of Deloncle and Dévellé.

After the defeat of China by Japan, she secured a more favourable frontier and special commercial rights in the three southern provinces of China: three years later, China agreed not to cede land in these provinces to any other Power and to lease Kwang-chow-wan to France as a naval depot. Concessions had also been obtained for the Peking-Hankow and Lang-Cheou-Si Kiang railways and France was building up a network of economic privileges. It was a period of diplomatic warfare for commercial rights, with French lives at a premium. The assassination of two naval officers, as the official historians of French colonization naïvely related, "obtained for us, instead of reparations and indemnities, a new series of privileges, a better delimitation of territory near the port, and a permit for a Franco-Chinese company to exploit certain mines." <sup>23</sup>

But the trouble was that, after fifteen years of such struggle, France found that the English railway from Hankow to Canton and Kowloon dominated the situation and turned the bulk of traffic away from Tonkin. It was "a victory of Hong-Kong over Hanoi and Haiphong." This check in itself terminated the French policy of expanding Tonkin northwards by means of concessions wrested at the cannon's mouth, but it was given finality by the newer evaluation of South China's resources.

In the early nineties, the old exuberance of Dupuis's period was still in the air, and the Lyons "mission of commercial exploration" was studying Szechuan and stressing the potentialities of the Yangtse markets. They held anew that the Red River outlet was far more advantageously situated than the eastern outlets of China, and that Tonkin was the economic mistress of South China. Their report, in fact, might almost have been written by Dupuis or Garnier, and certainly kept alive the erroneous premises of the earlier years. <sup>24</sup>

More to the point were Leroy-Beaulieu's statements in *L'Economiste Français*. He scouted the idea of French commercial hegemony over South China. Why, he claimed, the very transport trade itself was largely mythical! "The three frontier provinces are the poorest of the whole Empire,—very mountainous, inhabited for the great part by very primitive tribes, and devastated and depopulated by the Mohammedan risings of the middle of last century." <sup>25</sup> Kwang-si was poor and pirate-infested, Kweichow was not much better despite its silk-resources, and Szechuan, though richer and with more trade, turned east to the Yangtse

<sup>23</sup> For documents, see *Journal Officiel*, 22/10/96, or Dubois et Terrier (1902), *op. cit.*, pp. 824, 927-942.

<sup>24</sup> Chambre de Commerce de Lyon—*La Mission lyonnaise en Chine*, 1895-1897 (1898).

<sup>25</sup> *L'Economiste Français*, 1900, or British Parliamentary Paper, Cd. 324, 1901, p. 14.

and not south to Tonkin. Even for Yunnan, the Red River route was uncertain and dangerous, and could not compete with the English outlet *via* the West River.

On the whole, then, very little trade passed the Indo-Chinese frontier at Laokay, and, by the dawn of the century, France saw her Chinese expectations dwindle, and her interests turn from outside her own border to the development of Tonkin's internal wealth,—a significant change of emphasis. The wider but illusory advantages of the South Chinese trade were thus cast aside for the more restricted but practical development of Indo-China itself. French policy had left beliefs for facts. Such Chinese trade as there was was to come out by a railway through Tonkin instead of the treacherous Red River, but, after all, this was seen to be only a minor phase of Indo-Chinese life, and not, as had been thought for thirty years, the very *raison d'être* of the colony.<sup>26</sup>

It was not until 1900, therefore, that the elements of the Indo-Chinese position were clearly discerned, and that policy was determined by the real nature of the situation. By that date, there was an Indo-Chinese Federation (1891), with the powers of the central organization being gradually developed under Doumer (1895–1905), and with the component parts well-defined. There were five distinct countries in the peninsula, one of which alone was a French colony. There, in Cochin-China, the Algerian policy was applied, and the colony had the usual paraphernalia of a deputy to the French Parliament and an official Financial Council in the colony itself. The other four provinces were protectorates, but with control exercised in a different fashion in each, and with actual policy largely determined by the pre-existing degree of native organization. All had Residents-General controlling the civil and judicial services, and all were directly ruled by native mandarins. But political and administrative organization in Annam and Tonkin was predominantly Chinese, whereas it was Indian in Cambodia and Laos, and less democratic than in the Chinese sections. Over and above this were other differences. Tonkin was legally a protectorate joined to Annam, but, after 1897, became to all intents and purposes a colony like Cochin-China, for the last Annamite viceroy was suppressed in that year, and organization approximated more and more to that of the southern colony. Annam itself tended to advance in quite an opposite direction. Possibly because it was the most archaic and poorest of the Chinese regions, the French neglected it. The protectorate over it remained only in name, and it became a native State under French protection, with a degree of change inversely proportionate to that of its neighbour, Tonkin.

<sup>26</sup> J. Chailley, *Paul Bert au Tonkin* (1887), pp. 185–196. A long report on Yunnanese trade is in *Journal Officiel*, 28/1/90.

Cambodia was even less changed. It had a sovereign under French protection, but, because it was a nation with a long civilization distinct from that of the other Indo-Chinese states, it remained a backward Oriental kingdom of the interior. Laos was practically untouched, and is still protected by its poverty and isolation. It takes fifty days to go from Saigon to its capital, and so Laos is further from Cochin-China than France. Accordingly it remained inert and undeveloped under its hereditary princes.

On the whole, therefore, the Indo-Chinese federation resolved itself into five utterly dissimilar states, with French policy differing in each. Effective attention was confined to Cochin-China and Tonkin, the two extremes, which were the richest and most populated states of the federation. One of these was completely assimilated, the other became increasingly so, and such was the position that the remaining three states existed only to give some degree of geographical continuity to these two provinces. Indo-China meant Tonkin and Cochin-China: the rest were only ballast. The federation was thus a *congeries* of unlike provinces, unequally developed and unequally desired, and with the points of difference outweighing the common features.

## II. The People and their Civilization

One feature was early evident,—that Indo-China was predominantly a native country and that any scheme of development had to be determined by this basic feature. This realization was at once a limit and a possibility, but it at least kept policy in accord with facts.

The race of the various peoples was not as important in this case as their civilizations.<sup>27</sup> The aboriginal natives, for instance, the Moi of South Annam, the Khas of Laos and the various hillmen of Tonkin, are unimportant, however curious they may be from an ethnological point of view. On these, three other peoples had come. The Thais, now a million and a quarter strong, occupied the river-basins in Upper Tonkin and Laos, and the Cambodians, the ancient Khmers, settled in the upper delta of the Mekong, and now number a million and a half.

Far more important than either of these were the Annamites,<sup>28</sup> whose history largely determined the past and present of Indo-China. The various autochthones were either declining or backward throughout the centuries, and even the Cambodians, an entirely agricultural race, became more and more effaced. It was the Annamites who came to dominate the country and to make its civilization predominantly Chinese.

<sup>27</sup> A racial analysis is in *Bulletin de l'Office Coloniale*, Nov. 1911; the figures for 1921 are in Caillard, *L'Indo-Chine Française* (1922), p. 37.

<sup>28</sup> Frequently spelt "Annamese."

They occupied the Tonkinese delta in the third century of this era and radiated outwards until they absorbed the other kingdoms. They mastered Cambodia in 1658 and Cochinchina in 1768, and were pushing still west towards Siam when the French came. The French were thus brought up against a traditional expansionist tendency and a remarkable power of absorption in a quiet way. The Annamites at present number 15 millions and comprise the great majority of the population on the eastern side of the mountains,—that is, in the rich regions on which exploitation must centre. They are very compact in the Tonkin delta and in Cochinchina, and, though less dense in the south, occupy the Annamite lowlands. They are clearly *the* race of Indo-China: they are the hardest working, the most enterprising, the most prolific, and the most civilized. There has never been any question of the Annamites giving way by inanition as the Chams and Cambodians did, nor was the submergence of their traditional civilization ever a matter of serious politics. The Annamite knows no racial or cultural decadence, despite the French conquest. On the other hand, the record of the past twelve centuries and the persistence of their traditions impart those elements of vitality which decide the future of a race. They are, and always have been, peaceful absorbers and conquerors, spreading their influence in the way a tropical forest inexorably creeps over a tract of cleared land. Tenacity is the key-note of everything Annamite, as the French found when they attempted to introduce their theory of assimilation in the eighties.<sup>29</sup>

Everything with them is fashioned on immobility. They are Chinese to the core. "The Annamite soul," it has been said, "is fashioned on Chinese Confucianism," and this determines their social and political laws.<sup>30</sup> Other religions, Taoism and Buddhism for instance, have been superimposed at various times, but with about as little influence on the basic structure as French ideas have had in the political world. The Annamites constitute a solid *bloc* of racial impermeability in the way of all change. Change to them is heresy and irreverence to the ancestors they worship, and custom has its support firmly founded on the familial nature of social organization.

The entire public and private life of the country is based on the family. It is "the centre round which all interests and all ideas pivot," wrote de Lanessan in 1887. The commune, a collection of families, is the basis of administration, as was pointed out by Luro, the official who

<sup>29</sup> A good survey is in the special Indo-Chinese number of *La Vie Technique et Industrielle* (Paris), 1922, p. 43 *et seq.*

<sup>30</sup> F. Bernard, *L'Indo-Chine* (1901), pp. 14-20; L. Vignon, *Un Programme de Politique Coloniale* (1919), p. 110 *et seq.*

first made known the secret of Indo-Chinese organization in his *Pays d'Annam* (1897), and whose work is still the *vade mecum* of French administrators there.<sup>31</sup> The head of the family has absolute authority and bases his power on ancestor-worship and the sanctions this implied. The family is a little State resting on unquestioning obedience. So in turn, the commune is a larger family and the State a larger commune, all of them based on absolute authority. The Emperor has the same rights over his subjects as the father over the family, and the whole organization rested motionless on the tablets of Confucius.

Yet this was not all of the situation. So far, Annamite organization was absolute and theocratical. Paradoxically enough, a distinctly democratic tendency was joined to this. What made the Annamite organization unique was that the functionaries were chosen by competitive examination in this pre-eminently autocratic *régime*. The absolute authority of the "Son of the Heavens" was sapped in practice by the power of the *litterati*, the successful examinees. They were the governors, the *Tong-Doc* of provinces, prefectures and sub-prefectures,—persons who were really the moving force in administration. Side by side with them were the local officials of the communes and cantons. These were elected chiefs. The people of the villages chose a chief and council, and the delegates of the various villages met to elect a cantonal head, who was to be the *liaison*-officer between state and communes. Thus, State officers permeated down to the canton: local officers went up this far. Pre-French organization was based on a harmonious co-operation of two forces,—the sovereign and mandarins representing the theocratic and governmental aspects, and the elected notables in the communes representing the democratic phase of the situation. Between them was the connection of the examinations. The mandarins and the communes were clearly the institutions natural to the country, and the balance of power between them was quite unique. Illogical, perhaps absurd as the combination was, it worked well and was sanctioned by the success of centuries. The peculiar blend of autocracy and democracy fitted in with both sides of the Annamite character and afforded a real self-expression for the people.

Everything thus seemed ready-made for the French when they came. The natural thing to do—the only thing, it seemed—was to recognize the existing organization and thus solve the whole problem of administration. Call the village chief and council a Mayor and Council of Notables respectively, retain the elected mandarins, and control the more or less ornamental sovereign—and the needs of France would be satisfied

<sup>31</sup> E. Luro, *Le Pays d'Annam* (2nd edition, 1897), p. 160 *et seq.*; Vignon (1919), *op. cit.*, p. 140 *et seq.*

and the peculiarities of native organization respected. Based on contradictions though the entire structure was, it was imbedded in custom and religion, and there was nothing in the whole that was incompatible with French aims, and indeed little that was not conducive to progress under the given conditions. The main thing to do was to control the mandarins, and the system, despite its idiosyncrasies, readily lent itself to such outside control. It seemed as if the basic immobility of Annamite life could be safeguarded, and yet the utmost efficiency obtained for the French with the minimum of effort.

Luro had made the situation clear, and France could not deny knowledge of the religious and traditionalist nature of Annamite organization. The remedy was made equally clear, and there seemed no reason why a colonizing Power should not have adopted the obvious policy. But France was drugged by the assimilation-idea, and, obsessed with this, tried to fly in the face of native organization and character, with results that were foregone. Hence the record of vacillation and procrastination that made the early stages in Indo-China a formidable rival of the corresponding stage in Algeria for the dubious privilege of being considered the nadir of French colonization.

### III. The Early Struggles of Principle (1885-1895)

The essentials of the position were clear beyond any possibility of doubt. To progress at all, organization had to be based on a respect of native institutions, especially where they were of so vigorous and peculiar a nature. On the other hand, the Colonial Congress of 1889 had declared that the principle of assimilation was to be universally applied. To the French, the only method of progress was by assimilation: to the natives, progress meant immobility. The two were quite incompatible. The position called for a loose protectorate, but France set out to introduce a rigid assimilation. There was no attempt at compromise, no consideration of local needs and forces. To the assimilators of the eighties, Annamite organization was an obstacle in the way of progress and a relic of past barbarism. In fact, France reckoned her success in these first years in terms of the destruction of native life. As half-way measures were impossible under the conditions, there emerged a war of principles. France, it is true, had political and military force, but the natives possessed the kind of force that rendered these two powerless, and that alone could triumph in such a country. They had the age-old force of passive resistance and cultural expansion: so long as they lived, they could impose their culture on those with whom they came in contact, and maintain it. The French were fighting an intangible force—the soul and religion of a people; and, in the Far East, this makes

the combat unequal and the issue inevitable from the first, if racial annihilation is out of the question.

Not all of the French colonials, of course, were so enamoured of the assimilation idea that they could not see the logic of a situation which demanded other methods. Two sets of thinkers combined to demand a special *régime* for Indo-China,—those who, while convinced of the desirability of assimilation under certain conditions, looked on it only as one method of colonization, and those who thought that a protectorate was the only valid colonial method.

Strangely enough, it was Ferry who first emphasized this point. Imagination and adaptability to other circumstances were not attributes usually conceded to this stalwart Lorrainer, yet he expressed the protectorate-theory for Indo-China more clearly than was done for long after. Even in the earliest days of Conquest, he stood for this method of rule. Hermand wanted annexation and direct conquest, and, because of his influence, the treaty of 1883 was a mixture between annexation and protectorate. Ferry, however, insisted that either this compromise or a direct annexation was impossible under the conditions and that any development had to be based on a respect of the local civilization. As he said, “for the very success of our efforts there, Annam *must* not be a pure fiction. This part of the Empire must remain a distinct but subordinate State, and one capable of finding in its own territory those resources which will permit it to live without embarrassment and to administer itself under our advice.”<sup>32</sup> The second treaty, that of June, 1884, therefore set up a protectorate alone.

This organic law of Indo-China was merely a re-edition of the Tunisian system, and, had its principles been given a practical expression, would have meant indirect rule for the whole land. Ferry stood for a negation of direct intervention and yet for a clear realization of the subordination of native authorities. “Absorb yourself with the idea that there should be neither annexation nor assimilation,” he wrote to Resident-General Lemaire of Annam,<sup>33</sup> “but at the same time, you must *use* the court of Annam, take it by the throat and bring it to make the mandarins progress in our sense. It is thus that the English proceed in India, and it is this that M. Cambon has done with success in Tunisia.” With this understanding of relative importance once enforced, native authorities could be utilized to the fullest extent. Under a semblance of the traditional immobility, there could thus be a gradual social progress, and one suited to the needs of the occasion. French authority was to be stressed, but only when native officials failed to perform their functions

<sup>32</sup> In *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 13/7/84.

<sup>33</sup> In full in A. Néton, *L'Indo-Chine et son avenir économique* (1904), pp. 55, 56.



in a satisfactory manner. Under ordinary conditions, the native rule was to remain as before; it was only where it was disruptive or unduly stagnant that there was to be change, and, even then, the change was to be so tactful as to be imperceptible to the mass of the people, however much it meant changing the higher officials. Taking them by the throat behind the curtains was at once an effective and a private process. Above all, wrote Ferry, "we want the Annamite kingdom to keep sufficient scope for its own existence and to limit our rôle to a supervising and controlling function, without interfering directly in the administration of the country." That was the main end, and emphasis was to be primarily on continuation, unless institutions were either directly anti-French or anti-social in the native sense,—even if this implied a slower rate of progress than was usual with the French.

With this theory clearly outlined, France had no doubt as to the needs of Indo-Chinese organization, and Ferry's statement of policy is still as true as it was in 1884. "As far as possible, you will seek to aid the existing powers and to direct their action for the most useful functioning of the country's social life, without prematurely seeking to substitute for them new organizations and systems borrowed from our civilization and our manners." The basic idea of a protectorate could not be more succinctly expressed. Ferry thus places himself in the list of France's native theorists. But, for the moment, it seemed as if the theory he outlined, despite the factors on the spot that worked for its acceptance, came to share some measure of his own unpopularity.

Why it was not accepted is a mystery, as everything at this stage seemed to be in its favour. De Lanessan, a leading colonial theorist, was sent out to investigate the position *in situ*, for there had been no coherent policy since 1883, and France had done nothing except pour armies of functionaries into the land. Yet the functionaries could not stir until it was decided whether there was to be annexation or a protectorate! As they were *bureau-trained* automata on the Algerian model, they naturally fought for annexation. They had no ready-made methods suitable for a protectorate, and, not adapted for the evolution of such methods in their own brains, even lacked the initiative and power of translating Cambon's experience in Tunisia to suit Indo-Chinese conditions. Despite this official opposition, de Lanessan fought for native traditions and customs.<sup>34</sup> It was abundantly clear that the tropical climate would never allow French *peuplement* and that hence all development had to be in native hands. To realize this, the natives had to be progressive, but progress was impossible without a political self-expression and a pride in their civilization—consummations which could be

<sup>34</sup> His report is in his *L'Indo-Chine* (1888).

achieved only by the maintenance of their old culture. De Lanessan ridiculed the idea of change in an age-old civilization which had balanced institutions and a regular hierarchy and a sufficient capacity for progress. Social immobility, he held, was desirable under these conditions,—and even a great degree of political immobility. Untoward change was the greatest enemy, and France, recognizing existing organizations, simply had to bring about enough change to allow the economic development of the country. De Lanessan's plea, like Ferry's, could not be misinterpreted. He stood for toleration on the part of the French and a recognition of the native polity, with all of its inevitable and perhaps desirable peculiarities. Certainly, the old institutions were as efficient as could be expected in that country, and to divert attention from the main question by speaking of the corruption of the mandarins was unjustified. This corruption might even be conducive to efficiency in the aggregate, it was held, and certainly its existence could not be as harmful as the disintegration that would follow any premature attempt to eradicate it. Even to stress it unduly showed that the critic still retained much of the assimilative frame of mind and was arguing from European to native conditions,—from like to unlike. De Lanessan's report thus stood for native development with a minimum of change, and supported Ferry's theory by showing how it accorded with the facts of the situation.

Ferry had thus made the theory, de Lanessan had shown that it met the actual situation, and now a man with imagination was sent to apply it. Paul Bert, the man so chosen, was an old collaborator of Ferry's in the latter's educational reforms in France and one of the oldest protagonists of the colonial cause. He was a scientist turned politician, and now a politician turned administrator. He was appointed Resident-General of Annam and Tonkin in January, 1886, and, in the few months before his death, early in November of the same year, he had demonstrated the practicability of the protectorate scheme and had carried out a policy which made him a tradition in colonial annals. Indo-China in these months of 1886 shares with Madagascar under Galliéni and Tunisia under Cambon the credit of being the most successful episode in French colonization : and Bert was directly the father of that scheme which went through Galliéni to Lyautey and through him to the present generation of colonial administrators. Paul Bert, in short, had an influence out of all proportion to the changes he introduced or to the actual events of his administration. He became a formative factor in the shaping of colonial policy, and his name a tradition,—and therein lies his real importance.

On his arrival in Indo-China, this middle-aged politician found

Tonkin little pacified, Annam in open revolt, and French influence in the outer regions entirely nominal. France held only the Delta in the north: beyond, the mountain lands of Upper Tonkin were almost entirely in rebel hands, and most of the north was not even explored. Annam was yet worse, for there the rising was open all over the country, and France held only certain isolated fortresses, with the troops virtually prisoners inside. "Not a province that did not occasion disquietudes, not a class of the people who could be treated as allies!" In particular the *litterati*, the governing class, were practically to a man against the French, because they saw in French rule the curtailment of their own privileges. They had flourished under the growing disintegration of the Annamite empire, as this had implied a practical hegemony for them in local matters: but now, with the inevitable French ideas of centralization, this would all go, and they would be either rudely dispossessed or converted into mere phantoms of authority. Autocrats to the core, they became either open or passive rebels, and it was in the last form, as nominal adherents but passive resistants of the French, that their influence was so deleterious. In their eyes, the Emperor at Hué, "the French Valet," was a traitor to his ancestors, and accordingly they stood aloof when his authority was confined to Hué and even his court menaced.<sup>35</sup>

Paul Bert arrived in April, 1886, but was already cognizant of the actual situation. He had first to establish himself, because, as the representative of the civil authority, the military stood out against him and were supported by those civil officials who believed in assimilation *à outrance*. But Bert asserted himself by rallying the merchant-classes, and then turned to his next task,—the necessity of establishing the administration and commencing the work of civilization with a capital of six million francs. The France of 1886, he knew, would not vote another *sou* for Tonkin, so he had to trim his policy according to his resources.

With valuable time wasted by his skirmishes with the French at the capital, and annoyed by his restricted resources, he turned to the problem proper. Being a straightforward fighter of the Ferry type, he plunged into its midst,—Annam. "Annam is given over to blood and fire," he cried: the general insurrection had become anarchical, and there were little wars of extermination everywhere. Reinforcing this immediate reason for intervention, too, was his realization that Annam was the key of the whole situation. Though economically backward, it was the governmental and cultural centre, and Hué, third-rate native town though it was, was the centre of Indo-Chinese life. Everything native

<sup>35</sup> J. Chailley, *Paul Bert au Tonkin* (1887), p. 17 *et seq.*

in the peninsula reached its culmination there, and Annam in general was the connecting link of Indo-China. The land could therefore serve France, if it were once pacified and organised on the right lines.<sup>36</sup>

But how could this be done? It was not a French colony, and clearly the way of advance was by winning over the native officials in some form or other. It was the *litterati* who governed Annam, however much the Emperor was the ceremonial and religious head of the land. Bert saw that his task was to turn the attention of the people towards the royal figurehead and win over the *litterati*. The people themselves afforded an easy task, because French intimidation and the constant uncertainty had by this time reduced them to a state of despairing apathy,—an ethnic melancholia. “We seek only rest. We are the old children of an old race. We ask only to die in peace,” they told the new Resident-General. But Bert answered this by turning their eyes to the cultural centre of their race, to Hué, and tried to revive the outer semblance of the Emperor’s authority. He utilized the ceremonial *flair* of the natives to give them a new interest in existence and to distract their attention from the realities of the situation. At the same time, he respected the local dignitaries and led them to support the new *régime* by leaving them largely unimpeded in their powers.

In Tonkin, to which he next turned, the problem was still more difficult, not only because the nature of the country made conquest more uncertain, but because Tonkin was ruled by Annamite mandarins who were foreigners in the native eyes. In Annam the native officials had at least belonged to the race of the people, but this position did not pertain in Tonkin. France’s enemies were the mandarins and the pirates, both of them unpopular with the mass of the people. Bert therefore perceived that, while the position in Annam had forced him to recognize the mandarins and hoodwink the people, in Tonkin the reverse policy of rallying the people and ousting the mandarins was called for.

He took the first steps by calling on the natives to help him against the pirates and the Chinese irregulars who swarmed over the province. These, he saw, were pillaging-bands who were not on the whole supported by the farming population. But the position was difficult, because the many reversals of French policy in the past had exposed their adherents to the terrible vengeance of the Court and the mandarins, and, besides, many natives were alienated by the disregard of their customs. It is not a good way to win over an essentially religious people by quartering troops and horses in their pagodas. Before he could start, Bert thus had to restore confidence in the French. Much in this direction

<sup>36</sup> J. Chailley (1887), *op. cit.*, pp. 39–44.

was done by a tactfully worded proclamation of April, 1886,<sup>87</sup> which assured the natives that the French wanted neither their lands nor to usurp their public functions, and which promised an absolute respect of their customs. This was something quite new in the history of French efforts in the land. Bert's predecessors had viewed the natives simply as heathen clods and none had thought of the idea of conciliating and reassuring them. Bert, to the contrary, made clear to them their position as co-partners in the development of the land, and gave them something tangible to cling to in the bewildering maze of change into which events had cast them.

Point was at once given to his proclamation by a series of reforms. *Corvées* were restricted, the abuses of tax-payment in kind removed, grants were given to impoverished provinces like Lang-Son, hospitals and charitable institutions founded, and other social reforms introduced to win over the suspicious natives. What decided them, however, was his war on the detested Annamite mandarins who had ground down the country for eighty years. This reform was at once salutary and popular, but it placed Bert in an immediate quandary. The abuses of mandarin-rule were obvious, their unpopularity equally so; but their abolition simply meant that there was no one to carry on the work of government. The basic principle of *litterati*-rule had been the denial of political education to the people and the consolidation of all authority in the hands of a body of officials selected at the Hué examinations. They bore the same relation to the Tonkinese that the English of the Indian Civil Service bear to the natives of India, save that each official was seeking his own preferment by corrupt methods. The problem of replacing them was thus a far more difficult one than destroying them, and Bert was perplexed. He was finding it difficult enough to explain why he was maintaining the mandarins in Annam and yet abolishing them in Tonkin, and now there was this problem of finding people to take their place. The obvious policy was to raise local Tonkinese functionaries, but the art of government cannot be acquired in a moment, and administration had been in the hands of a closed foreign caste for generations. And the point was that the people respected these professional administrators even while they hated them. With a remarkable optimism that he would be able to survive the interim, Bert therefore set up a Tonkin Academy, to choose from the middle class those *huyens* or cantonal chiefs who could pass examinations,—and thus obtain the *imprimatur* of culture which counted for everything in a Chinese country. In short, he provided the means to erect a new *litterati* class, but one well-disposed to France and, by its very origin, opposed to Annam.

<sup>87</sup> In full in J. Chailley (1887), Appendix A, p. 320.

In the same direction, and to govern the country as it then stood, he took the much-opposed step of instituting a Council of Notables (April, 1886).<sup>33</sup> This was far in advance of colonial theory at that time and was bitterly contested by the majority of experts. Representatives were to be elected from each province for a year and were to discuss national problems, returning to the provinces as the apostles of French rule. Arguing from the facts, the experts who opposed the scheme seemed to have the main arguments on their side, but by one of the twists of human nature that made Bert such a success, he was able to carry through a scheme which, by every theory, was impossible at that date. It certainly had the audacity of genius about it. Bert, immediately confronted with failure, was throwing a last dice with destiny, and staking all on his knowledge of human nature. There was something Quixotic about this policy, which was absurd in the light of every known canon of colonial theory and which seemed the last possible way out of the *impasse*. If facts meant anything, it was a position that called for Gatlings and not elections, yet Bert persisted, because the position was as intriguing to him as dubiously logical constitutional experiments were when the barricades were up in Paris in '71.

The device certainly brought him into touch with the people and finally aroused them from their apathetic indolence and veiled mistrust of his strange, and to them inexplicable, reforms. The result could not have been better. "The elected representatives belonged entirely to the class of people whom we were trying to reach. All of them except two were simple peasants, notables of their villages and generally poor. The most learned amongst them was a local schoolmaster whom they made their president." But these ignorant men had "a practical spirit and a stout heart," and were as easily won over as one of Balzac's village mayors would have been in going up to Paris. Bert rejoiced in experimenting with such simple types, and they in turn responded to the skilful way in which he blended ceremony and frank speaking. His sensible utterances appealed to them as self-made individuals, his solicitude touched the vanity of unimportant men raised suddenly to office, and his courtliness was in accord with the ceremonial spirit of China. He gave them specific points to discuss, knowing full well the tendency of all new-born legislatures to reform the world by platitudinous generalizations, and allowed them to deliberate away from functionaries and mandarins, knowing well, too, how easy was the transition backwards from the people's representative to the inferiority complex of the foreign-ruled serf. The upshot was that they discussed such matters as money-

<sup>33</sup> See Arrêté in Chaillay (1887), Appendix I, p. 349. See *Le Régime des Protectorats* (Bibliothèque Coloniale Internationale), Vol. I, 1899, p. 193.

taxes, the reconstruction of devastated areas, police, public-works, and the like, and concluded their report by the note that Bert had been quietly infusing into the whole of their deliberations,—“our works will not be approved by the mandarins but they will be entirely supported by the people.”<sup>39</sup> Bert had thus appealed in turn to their sincerity, their priggishness, their traditionalism, and their human hatreds, and had succeeded in securing forty-three friendly delegates to scatter French influence throughout the provinces : and it is amazing how such rumours spread in a crowded Oriental population which lacks newspapers. Bert knew whither he was tending, for he was using that *finauderie*, that untranslatable quality of the Normans, with which he was so fully endowed beneath his surface brusqueness.

He quickly realized that this happy experience could be manifolded by turning to the schools. He saw how an innate reverence for learning, especially on the part of those who had none, made examinations so important in Annamite existence, and how an extension of educational facilities would, by widening the sphere of opportunities open to ordinary Tonkinese, win over ever-increasing numbers of the people. The council-scheme had given him an *élite* of propagandists : he now invoked the aid of the schools to give him “an army of apostles.” But he was quite specific that *any* form of education would not do. Cochinchina, where there was assimilation in every field, had organized an educational system directly on the French model. “As a result,” it was said, “you find in Saigon young Annamites purely and gravely speaking the language of Louis XIV,” but these were simply a minority. The great mass of the population, outside of a few clerks and interpreters, knew no French, and it was difficult to secure enough interpreters to accompany the French expeditionary forces northwards. Bert wanted no duplication of this useless situation in Tonkin : he aimed at the spreading of serviceable French on a large scale, even if it were only a *patois*. Accordingly he set up 132 French schools by the end of the year. This was at the same time far simpler than teaching the extraordinarily difficult Annamite language and far more useful for the purposes of the government.<sup>40</sup>

All these reforms, political and educational and social, Bert carried through in less than six months. He instituted a system in every branch which had only to be carried on to secure the pacification of the natives right up to the Chinese frontier and which allowed any degree of economic exploitation by the French. To-day, such a system would still be in advance of the times : in 1886 it was revolutionary, and, given Bert's limitations in men and money and time, almost impossible.

<sup>39</sup> Chailley (1887), p. 129 *et seq.*

<sup>40</sup> G. Dumoutier, *Les Débuts de l'Enseignement française au Tonkin*, 1887.

His final declaration of policy, in a long circular of August 30, to the Residents,<sup>41</sup> carried even Ferry's theory a stage further, and remains his vindication. He explained why he had retained the mandarins in Annam yet abolished them in Tonkin; why the French Residents in Annam had to restrict themselves to purely political supervision, yet those in Tonkin had to control financial and administrative affairs as well; and why native officials had to be used everywhere and native institutions respected. "The natives will continue to exercise the functions conferred on them by the law of the land in general administration, justice, and tax-collection. Your rôle," he said to the Residents, "is *not* to administer in their place but to supervise and control their acts."

Then, for the natives, and to harmonize the conditions of their existence with the needs of development, he said, "they want laws specially made for them, laws modelled in a great measure on their own native laws, but amplified, when necessary, in accordance with the principles (but not the provisions) of our Western legal code." Laws were to be adapted to their requirements and based on existing native codes, but at the same time were not to neglect the needs of progress. Bert compromised on native lines, considering things as they appeared to native minds, and basing his justification on the correctness of his analysis of native psychology in each case. His policy was very much the expression of his own personality, but, once established, others could have continued it, had they so wished. Bert had more than justified Ferry's choice of an untrained man, and handed over a Tonkin and Annam pacified and organized as no other French colony was at that date. His successors could dissipate their heritage, they could not deny it.

The extent of his achievement made the complete collapse of the following decade the more reprehensible,—indeed, it may be termed the least justifiable of the many unjustified events in French colonization. Ferry, de Lanessan, and Paul Bert had all worked to achieve certain results: those results were achieved and needed only to be consolidated, when the new administrators turned entirely to a work of destruction. If Bert proved anything, it was the fundamental error of the earlier policy of assimilation and native destruction, and the astonishing success of his own policy: yet, because assimilation was the theory of the day and Paris was not enamoured of astonishingly successful policies in the colonies, his ideas were reversed and his work broken.

The five years after him were sad ones in every way.<sup>42</sup> There were

<sup>41</sup> In full in Chailley (1887), *op. cit.*, Appendix F, p. 329.

<sup>42</sup> A good account is in M. de Pourvoirville, *Études Coloniales, Parts I (Le Tonkin actuel, 1888-1889) and II (Deux Années de Lutte, 1890-1891)*, or a summary in A. Gaisman, *L'Œuvre de la France au Tonkin* (1906), p. 89 *et seq.*



no fewer than five governors in that time, each of them with a different *personnel* and a different policy. Affairs naturally drifted, because what the native demanded at this time was a fixed policy. Even a consistent policy of force would have been preferable to the continual changes, as change was the one thing unjustifiable in native eyes, while change on change was worse to them than the former oppression of Annamite mandarins. They turned to piracy in growing numbers, because, after all, with the civil administration disorganized and the military seeking campaigns and the pillaging-bands roaming over the country, the only way of securing safety was to become a pirate of the mountains. For its part, the French Government was convinced that events were merely justifying their attitude of 1885, that Bert's success had been melodramatic but unreal (and was he not a *protégé* of the now ostracized Ferry?), and that there was nothing good about Tonkin. They therefore refused credits and thus accelerated the drift. The fifth of the short-term governors, Piquet, refused to face this accumulated series of disasters and demanded his recall.

The position could scarcely have been worse in any way. The Chinese frontier had become "nothing more than a vast camp designed to organize pillaging-bands and to inundate us with pirates"<sup>43</sup>: "the natives fled systematically or openly fraternized with the pirates"; and in 1891 there were risings to the very gate of Hanoi. The position was so bad that France had to do something or evacuate the peninsula. As Etienne, the Under-Secretary of the Colonies, told the Deputies in March, 1891, "it is absolutely necessary to have a new method of colonization inspired by the treaty of 1884 (that is, the establishment of a protectorate), and a new man to save the colony from the abyss into which it has fallen."<sup>44</sup>

But Bert was dead and Ferry unavailable: therefore de Lanessan, the only survivor of the previous trio of reformers, was sent out by the de Freycinet Cabinet in 1891 as a special commissioner. He was to try to retrieve the country and to set the clock back to the time of Bert's death five years previously; but this was ages ago in so far as the temper of the people was concerned. He was given every power, as a too narrowly administrative rule was viewed as the cause of the existing failure, because it had banned originality and enterprise.<sup>45</sup> To effect this, a decree of April, 1891, enlarged the Governor-General's powers, so that Indo-China had a man with a positive theory and with adequate power to enforce his theory. Even Bert had been hampered throughout by the restrictions on his power: de Lanessan, on the contrary, had an

<sup>43</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 29/2/89.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, Deps., 20/3/91.

<sup>45</sup> J. L. de Lanessan, *La Colonisation française en Indo-Chine* (1895), pp. 355-357.

entirely free hand. No other colonial governor had ever had such extensive powers. He had control of all works, the disposal of all forces, and a summary right of dismissing officials. Indeed, he had absolute power without reference to Paris, so long as he did not call for more credits.

When he landed, he met a position similar to that which Bert had found, save for the increased bitterness and the mistrust of everything French due to the events of the preceding five years. Tonkin was in a state of collapse. The budget had a deficit of twelve million francs : there had been no public works for years : and the Deputies would not vote a franc. The natives had moved as a people against the French. "There was no longer piracy but rebellion," the acting governor had reported, even in the Delta, and only two provinces were quiet. The mountain-regions were practically independent, and Chinese pirates were absolute masters of all land west of the Red River. Annam was as badly off, with the mandarins either openly or covertly opposing France. Cambodia was quiet with the quietness of prostration, having weak budgets and not a single public-work since the declaration of the French protectorate. Cochinchina alone was relatively prosperous, because the growing rice-exports offset the deluge of French functionaries in the land. French Indo-China was thus restricted to the one southernmost State and two provinces in Tonkin, and the progress of the rebels made the latter only a "paper-asset."<sup>46</sup>

De Lanessan clearly perceived this situation, and, what was still more to the point, he was convinced that he knew where policy had erred in the past. He contended that there had been three entirely false assumptions,—that the mandarins were a detested aristocracy, to reverse whom would win over the people ; that the Emperor of Annam should be strengthened and would help against the mandarins ; and that Tonkin preferred foreign rule to that of Annam. All of these, he held, were absurd on the face of things. The crux of the situation as he saw it was that the *litterati* were the only trained officials and the only ones having the support of the people. To destroy them was political suicide for any outside conquerors and an anarchical state of drift for the natives. The mandarins, chosen by examination as they were and without distinction of birth, represented the most intelligent and zealous of the natives. Moreover, "the entire people being the source from which the mandarinat emanated, it was quite natural that the people should have the greatest respect for them" : and indeed, there was something almost religious about the respect of the people for them. Respect for

<sup>46</sup> De Pourvourville, *Études Coloniales*, Part III (*La Politique Indo-Chinoise*, 1892-1893), or de Lanessan (1895), *op. cit.*, pp. 1-6.

them was a corollary of the respect of children for their parents,—a mandarin was “the father and mother” of his charges, and thus personified the basis on which Annamite society was built. Thus, quite apart from the impossibility of replacing them by anybody else, it was clear that they had to stay. To repress them meant to create an impossible situation, to shatter the basis of education, and perhaps of society, and certainly to break that curious balance which had been so typical of Annamite life in pre-French days. In outlining this situation, de Lanessan may conceivably have over-emphasized the popularity of the mandarins, but, even so, he was giving a policy in accord with some at least of the facts, and anything was better than the existing confusion.

To support this new attitude, the reformers adduced the experience of the past. In Cochinchina the abolition of the *litterati* had left the French face to face with the notables in the communes, and with no link between these local representatives and the central Government. The result was a paralysis of the whole, because the *litterati* were the *liaison*-officers who had kept the machine functioning. To fill the gap, therefore, the French had to reinstall the native officials in some form or other, but, because the original *litterati* had withdrawn to the Hué court, all kinds of substitutes had to be used. The only persons available were interpreters, militia-men, and servant “boys,” all viewed as renegades, and all ignorant and despised in a community where so much stress was laid on training and culture. The result was a complete fiasco, and Cochinchina merely limped on from year to year. Even Paul Bert had encountered this difficulty in Tonkin and had been compelled to leave the mandarins in Annam completely untouched.

De Lanessan resolved therefore to re-establish the mandarins in their former power. French rule, to mean anything in such a land, had to be indirect rule,—that is, rule through the channels to which the natives were accustomed and by officials who were endowed with traditional importance. He recognized them as governors of the local districts and restored the old connection between the Tonkinese mandarins and the Annamite court. For his part, the Emperor issued an ordinance insisting on their loyalty to France: de Lanessan, in return, recognized the old suzerainty of the Emperor over Tonkin and the mandarins. He even gave them command of the local militia, the result being that, since it was now to their interest to restore peace in the land, most of the Delta was tranquil by the end of 1891, and everywhere the mandarins “became one of the best agencies of pacification.”<sup>47</sup>

With pacification thus accomplished (it was only a matter of time

<sup>47</sup> De Lanessan (1895), *op. cit.*, pp. 9-12. Compare his *L'Indo-Chine* (1889), p. 754; or Etienne in *Journal Officiel*, *Déps.*, 1/12/91, p. 2379.

to extend it to the mountain-regions), de Lanessan went on to introduce the rest of his native system. In the first place, he restored a uniform organization in Annam and Tonkin. Up to this time, the French parliament had been obsessed with the idea that Tonkin wanted liberty from Annam's yoke, and so had rejected General de Courcy's attempt to so modify the treaty of 1884 as to recognize the Emperor's authority over Tonkin as well as Annam. In his eyes, the country wanted method and uniformity above all else.

"Heretofore, each Resident-General has done what he liked, denying or enforcing the treaty of 1884 according to the caprice of circumstances or the theory ruling for the moment: the one would try to conquer this or that part of central Annam, the next would reverse his predecessor's policy in this direction: and none of them showed any respect for Annamite authorities, either in central Annam or in Tonkin, but left each Resident to direct the affairs of his province according to his own idiosyncrasies. Of order or rule, there was none, save that policy changed with each change of *personnel*." <sup>48</sup>

From 1883 to 1891, there were twenty Residents-General, and this implied administrative anarchy. In addition, there was the ever-present temptation to take advantage of the greater power given them in Tonkin by the treaty and to rule directly and forcibly. Against all of this, de Lanessan now declared for uniform protectorate measures,—by native agencies and for native welfare.

The third article of his creed was to retain native organizations. With an old changeless people like the Annamites, opposed both by religion and temperament to innovations in any form, it was impolitic to adopt a policy of needless change. He did not want to duplicate the turmoil caused in Cochin-China by the destruction of the Annamite communes and the supplanting of the native systems of law by the French *Code Civile*. Such extraneous codes merely introduced concepts foreign to the Annamites and served to reverse several of their basic ideas,—as, for instance, those of the family, inheritance, and the commune. De Lanessan, opposing such untoward changes, stated dogmatically that the three basic rules of modern colonization were to respect the native religion, to respect their social institutions, and to respect their functionaries.

In pursuance of these ideas, he took his stand against the traditional system of the French colonies,—what he called "the prefectorial *régime*." This he defined as "administrative *paperasserie*, an infinite multiplicity of governmental machinery, and a cumbrous and costly French *personnel*," the whole combination considering neither varying races nor

<sup>48</sup> De Lanessan (1895), *op. cit.*, p. 23.

local conditions. All of the customary French theories—conquest, administrative assimilation, commercial monopoly—were out of date, he held : all of them spelt failure in a place situated as Indo-China was.

He pacified and organized the land on these lines, doing much to remove the gap of mistrust that had emerged since Bert's time. But, this consolidation achieved, he had to face the more difficult problems of development, because he knew that, unless he made the colony self-sufficient and economically progressive, his entire work would be reversed when he left the scene, as that of Paul Bert had been. He had either to admit failure or make Indo-China pay. Further, he had to do this with his own resources, and without coupling in the native minds the ideas of his reforms and economic exploitation. Face to face with this problem, the earlier task of restoring protectorate-principles seemed almost simple. But there was no alternative, and, though not fitted for the task, de Lanessan plunged himself whole-heartedly into the work of economic development. A strategic railway to Lang-Son was started : ports were made : encouragements given to traders and settlers : 350 kilometres of roads built in the Delta in two years (1891-1892) : taxation made more efficient, and money raised. Money, indeed, was his bugbear. When he went to Indo-China, no financier would have lent him a million francs : when he left, he had constructed fifty million francs' worth of public-works, and French financiers, without a guarantee from the Government, had lent enough money for 1,500 kilometres of railway. All of this was attacked both in the colony and at home as mortgaging the budgets of the future, but more to the point was the fact that results were secured at the desired moment and the country's position transformed in consequence.

But Paris had become uneasy about this interpretation of the powers they had conferred on de Lanessan and he was abruptly recalled in 1894 in the very midst of his work. In four years, he had increased tax-receipts from 3,760,000 to 6,600,000 piastres, and customs-revenue from 820,000 piastres to 2,040,000 : but now, without any cause, the economic consolidation of the country was interrupted and even the railways delayed for two years. How needless the recall was was evident to all concerned. Even the president of the Council of Ministers which was responsible termed the act an *enfantillage*, and Jaurès pointed out in the Deputies in March, 1895, that, while de Lanessan had been recalled for carrying out a certain policy, his successor was advised by the same government to continue that policy ! <sup>49</sup>

Paris, however, was not to be thwarted in its desire to extirpate this growing decentralization. To prevent a recurrence of such activities

<sup>49</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 3/3/95.

as de Lanessan's, a decree was issued in March, 1896, limiting the public-works of Indo-China to the *annual* resources of the country. Even these were taken from the control of the Governor-General and placed under an agent corresponding directly with the Minister of Finance in Paris. As with the corresponding *rattachements* in Algeria, all initiative was taken from the Governor-General and the colony placed under the Parisian *bureaux*. The effect was at once to stamp out any initiative, and the new Governor-General, Rousseau, simply had to mark time in his two years of office. He was as much a *fainéant* as were the Governors-General of Algeria in the eighties, and Paris seemed to be striving to reduce Indo-China to the position it was in when Paul Bert died. De Lanessan's native policy still remained, it is true, because nobody could think of an alternative one; but his economic policy was nullified. This position lasted until the Méline Cabinet sent out Paul Doumer in 1897.

Once more an effective policy had been evolved in Indo-China, and once more, seemingly, allowed to die by administrative opposition. The country threatened to duplicate in 1897 the conditions of a decade earlier and to be the grave of colonial reputations. It was going from bad to worse, and even improvements had to be brought about in the face of official opposition. No other colony had had a history so chequered; and Tonkin came to pall in this decade, when the colonial craze was for military conquest on the African model. France wanted to hear of victories in the field, not of difficulties of organization. Indo-China therefore simply limped on, with the officials discouraged or acquiescent, and the natives once more reverting to their favourite pastime of piracy. The colony's affairs were again coming under the influence of that psychology of despair which was the bane of the situation: there was an obvious drift.

#### IV. Paul Doumer (1897-1902)

Paul Doumer was an advanced radical deputy with experience on the financial side of public administration. He had been Minister of Finance in the Bourgeois Cabinet and, as the colonial budget-reporter, had made a study of Tonkin's finances in 1895, when the colony's position had become so bad that something had to be done.<sup>60</sup> He was also a thorn in the side of the Government, which sent him to Indo-China to get rid of him and possibly in the hope that the difficulty of restoring order there would tarnish his reputation. He thus came to Indo-China with very marked predilections and ideas, both on the subjects of finance and Parisian control. To these he added an undoubted belief in his own powers and a determination to start everything in Indo-China

<sup>60</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 29/3/95, 30/6/95.

afresh. If anything, he under-estimated the importance of Paul Bert and de Lanessan, and seeing in Indo-China largely the chaos of 1894, he wanted to transform the whole situation, first by organizing the government, then (and here was the crux of his work) by developing the finances and public works of the country. "Organize!" was his cry: he was to introduce method and uniformity where there had previously been none. Thus his work, if forceful and salutary, was stamped with a somewhat artificial character before he started. But this was not an unmixed evil in the Indo-China of 1897. The country demanded force and continuity and precision. It did not matter very much what the policy was as long as it was a policy: and Doumer's greatest service was in lasting five years and in adhering to a consistent line of action. He set out to eradicate what he termed "the policy of effacement" and stood for "a policy of action." He gathered up the various trends in the colony's life, re-vitalized them, and made them coherent by the impress of his vigorous, perhaps too vigorous, personality.

When he landed, energy was an unknown quantity. Each of the colonies was in an unsound financial position and had increasing deficits. "Indo-China" was simply an administrative expression that bore no relation to facts. Cochin-China, rich as it was, was ruined by an over-rigid policy of assimilation and the consequent control by an army of French officials. This oligarchy controlled the imposition of taxes and the spending of public funds, so that it was not unnatural that the natives were always paying. Doumer found here an intrinsically rich colony paralysed by the sectional administration of officials, who were deliberately swelling their own numbers and the numbers of the Indian labourers to get votes. Frenchmen and Indians from the five towns in India alone enjoyed the franchise. Cochin-China therefore had become a synonym for corruption on a large scale. Cambodia, the next colony, was entirely outside the French sphere and maintained its picturesque Indian ceremonies entirely to the neglect of efficiency or modernization. Annam was in the hands of the mandarins who controlled the Emperor, and was a hotbed of disaffection: and Tonkin, as usual, was the very centre of unrest. Despite Paul Bert and de Lanessan, the French had reverted to direct methods of administration there, with the alienation from the people that this entailed in such a country. The natives, separated from the government by an impassable gap, were given over to poverty and insecurity. "The Annamite of Tonkin," reported Doumer, "regarded us with fear,—like a poor beaten animal which is always apprehensive of its master's brutality." The requisition of coolies for military columns, in particular, produced the impression that the State sanctioned a modified slavery, and the constant uncertainty demoralized





this essentially peaceful race of cultivators. All of these States were under the Government-General which had nominally been introduced in 1891, but in practice the position meant a Governor-General without a Government-General. There was little co-ordination of efforts and no similarity of policies. Over everything was the insidious blight of the mandarins. Some were retained, others dispossessed, but all were suspicious of the French and disillusioned by the increasing amount of direct rule by French officials in the previous few years. France had irretrievably alienated these native officials, who retaliated by telling the natives that their own exactions were imposed by the French Government. In all, the Indo-China of 1897 was a striking object-lesson on how *not* to colonize in an Oriental country.<sup>51</sup>

Doumer at once arrayed these various weaknesses so that he could estimate the situation in its entirety. That precision which he had gained in his early days as a Parisian compositor always made his mental processes rather deceptively mechanical. Then, knowing the faults, he formulated his general policy of redress. In a few words, he summed up the situation. "It was the lack of governmental and financial organization that caused the weakness of the country: and it was the absence of economic machinery that prevented the development of its resources. It was necessary, therefore, to *organize* Indo-China and to create economic machinery,—a general plan which would be executed as possibilities presented themselves."<sup>52</sup> That is, he wanted to regularize administration as a starting-point and then commence his real work,—of ensuring the *mise en valeur* or economic development of the country. "The economic work, the main end of colonization, has scarcely commenced in Indo-China."

His course of action was therefore so clear as to admit of no doubt. He had first to organize the Government-General and make it a real co-ordinating and directing feature. It had to be the centre of Indo-Chinese affairs, and the various local administrations had to be altered so that they would fit in with the general structure. This entailed the definition of a real protectorate over Annam and Cambodia, and the modernization of each place. The rule of the dominating clique of officials in Cochin-China had to go, and some ruling given as to the method of governing Tonkin,—and this included the vexatious question of the *littérati*. Political organization achieved, he had to attack the still more important financial side. The various Governments, especially the federal Government, had to obtain stable budgets, or their very

<sup>51</sup> P. Doumer, *Rapport d'ensemble sur les affaires de l'Indo-Chine*, 22/3/97, or his *Situation de L'Indo-Chine*, 1897-1901 (1902).

<sup>52</sup> Doumer, *L'Indo-Chine Française* (1905), pp. 286, 287.

existence would be a matter of doubt. In particular, taxes had to be so manipulated that the federal and not the local administrations would be the main recipients. This reform of taxation naturally led to an overhaul of the whole world of finance,—in fact, a search for “a régime suitable to the country, to its social state, and to the customs of the natives as well as to the needs of the budget.”

If these two preliminary reforms, governmental and financial, could be secured, Doumer knew that he could easily go on to his third and most important problem,—that of general economic development. He saw that development in Indo-China meant economic modernization, and that without this the land would for ever be as unstable as it had been up to 1897. His main work, therefore, was to give the land its economic machinery, and all other reforms were but preliminaries to this. Railways, canals, roads, ports, all had to be constructed : hence, his rule centred on the 1898 scheme of railways and public-works. This once carried out, production and commerce would be increased, and both French colonization and native proprietorship develop. In a word, the economic development that would follow his governmental organization would complete the transformation of the country and allow an unlimited development in the future. Doumer thus proposed an entire policy of colonization, differing from Bert's in being economic, and from de Lanessan's in being primarily and not secondarily economic.

All of this scheme seems obvious to present observers, as it simply epitomizes the ruling theory of “industrial colonization” : but it must be remembered that it was unknown in the French colonial system of 1897, and that Doumer's essential service was in formulating a comprehensive policy. This at once placed him in the ranks of the great colonials, and it is a moot point whether the clarification thus brought about was not as important as the execution of the policy. To carry out such a policy may be the work of many men : it was its promulgation that was the essential expression of Paul Doumer,—the work that he alone could have done. Doumer industrialized French colonial policy, for, apart from Ferry's generalizations, there was nothing approaching this in French colonial theory until Albert Sarraut's theory of a *mise en valeur* in 1920. Doumer had gone much further than the purely native concepts of Paul Bert, and, though he was indebted to de Lanessan's concept of economic policy as a necessary complement of native policy, the resultant *ensemble* was clearly his own.

In carrying out his theory, he had first to create the various Governments. Each State within the union was proceeding on different methods, and it could almost be said that Indo-China was not organized at all, except in Cochin-China. In this southernmost colony, Doumer's task

was simple. He had merely to restore the traditional French colonial system and to clear away the abuses that had swept over it. It was too late to regret the replacement of the mandarins by low-grade French officials: the assimilation-*régime* had definitely been chosen, and all that Doumer could do was to make it as efficient as possible. It is true that nobody could entirely eradicate the faults of direct administration and assimilation in an Asiatic country, but a reformer could at least render them fairly innocuous. Doumer therefore lessened the abuses of the official hierarchy, reformed the Colonial Council, and prevented the framing of a budget solely in the interest of the French officials. Despite this, the basic evils remained. The army of officials continued as before. There were 290 civil officials in 1900 where there had been fifty mandarins before annexation, and, in proportion to the population, Cochinchina had ten times as many officials as Java. Yet even these had to be aided by native auxiliaries! <sup>53</sup>

With the cultured and trained mandarins, went all of the codes suitable to the country. French laws and customs came in, even for purely civil matters. No deference was paid to native tradition, and Cochinchina had none of the mixed courts of Java or Tunisia. Everything native was swept aside, and the disgruntled Cochinchinese remained passively hostile to the French. To these faults of officialdom and native neglect was added economic stagnation, and it was only because Cochinchina was an intensely rich land that it could prosper at all. Public works, save in the towns, were practically non-existent. There were no agricultural or irrigation improvements: the port of Saigon was almost as it had been in 1860: the same old river-junks provided the means of transport, and there were only seventy kilometres of railway. Cochinchina remained in the same economic state of primitive rice-cultivation that it had known for centuries, and there was neither development nor efficiency. Yet the French thought that they were model colonizers here, because they had proven themselves the best town-planners in the Orient. A town like Saigon had pretentious palaces, a cathedral, the best theatre east of Suez, and all of the amenities of Parisian life! With this splendour before the people's eyes, it mattered little that every drink of water was a gamble with disease and that the word "sanitary system" was almost forgotten! "In the capital as in the colony," it was said, "nothing was wanting—except necessities." The spectacular ineffectiveness of the assimilation-*régime* could not have been better demonstrated than in the Indo-China of 1900. Yet Doumer, with all his zeal, could do little. Assimilation could not be eradicated, and, with it, little could be done in the way of change.

<sup>53</sup> F. Bernard, *L'Indo-Chine* (1901), pp. 43-45.

He therefore turned with added determination to the virgin field of Cambodia, which had hitherto remained a picturesquely useless relic of Oriental mediævalism. The problem here was quite different from that in the coastal provinces. The latter were fundamentally Chinese and stiffened by generations of Annamite rule: the inland kingdom was entirely Indian and was never effectively a part of the Annamite Empire. The sovereign of Cambodia was nominally a tributary of the Emperor of Hué, but the Annamites had never invaded the land. This in turn meant that the energy found in the coastal populations was unknown here: in its place was a nerveless apathy, a tendency to find a shelter from modern problems by enwrapping their very thoughts with the atmosphere of Angkor-Wat and their mythical past. The Cambodians, docile and unprogressive, sought the last refuge of a decadent race in refusing to face facts. They had no energy or faith in their race, and none of that force of expansion which characterized the Annamites. They were essentially Indians; as Doumer said, "they carry their certificate of origin on their face and in their character." But their history had ended with the overthrow of their Khmer ancestors, and, since then, they had been a race of living dead.

None the less, they were a distinct body, both racially and culturally, and so could be organized on different lines from the coastal populations. Doumer saw this, and saw too that the progress of the race could be assured, if he could in some way connect the present with the past. The land was still an old Asiatic kingdom, untouched by Europe, save for the *rococo* palace of King Norodom and the presence of a French Resident-Superior, who changed nothing so long as the game of the country afforded him sufficient hunting. Doumer therefore resolved to continue but to revitalize the past.<sup>64</sup> He insisted that the native kingdom should be maintained in all its splendour and power, and deprecated the usurpations of the Residents. The "protected States" of India were his model, and he simply reproduced in Cambodia the system of the English, say, in Kashmir. That is, he allowed the king and the native officials to govern as before and limited the French Residents to purely advisory functions. But, to prevent such a complete stultification as there had been in the past, he spread Residents throughout the provinces and arranged for certain necessary reforms. For instance, barbarous institutions were repressed. Debt-slavery and torture were abolished, and elements of equity introduced into the political system. The reception of these various reforms best explains the situation. When foreigners were taken from the anomalous native code and placed under French

<sup>64</sup> Documents in *Le Régime des Protectorats*, Vol. I, 1899, *op. cit.*, p. 415. Doumer (1905), *op. cit.*, p. 221 *et seq.*

justice, the King protested, because this deprived him of one of his main sources of revenue,—the profits of “judging” the rich Chinese merchants! When the demoralizing public-games were abolished, he again protested that demoralization was nothing compared with his revenue, and needed a promenade of gunboats before he could see the logic of the French contention.

At the same time, “a gate was opened to French settlement in Cambodia,” because it was realized that the natives would prosper most by a development of their country’s resources. An ordinance of 1897 therefore recognized French titles to land. Up till then, the only French colonists had been half a dozen traders at the capital, but this new edict would allow a steady infiltration of French influence. When concluded by his scheme of water-transport, Doumer’s reorganization opened a new phase in Cambodian history. It converted French control from name to reality, and opened the land. Native interests were safeguarded and yet a considerable degree of modernization allowed. If the scheme worked out (and this was the essential qualification), the dictates of equity and progress were both provided for: but it remained to be seen whether Doumer was over-estimating the importance of organization in such a land, where it was the spirit of the people that provided the difficulty.

After all, the Cambodian problem was relatively simple, because Doumer was working with untouched material. When he turned to Annam, however, he was confronted by the demoralization and bitterness caused by the mistaken policies of the past. He had to eradicate both the errors and the frame of mind induced by them before he could secure any progress. He had to change the very psychology of a people and convince them that the earlier policies had been mistakes,—and it must be remembered that, with a people like the Annamites, such a confession of past failure was tantamount to damning the new policy before ever it was elaborated.

Annam in 1897 was nominally a French protectorate. Really, affairs went on much as before, save that a bitter hostility was felt towards the French. The Emperor was a boy: the three Regents and the mandarins all made administration and justice a source of profit for themselves. “The Annamite government thus functions almost as it did before the French conquest. All of the mandarin hierarchy is conserved in the provinces, and the administrative practices are the same.”<sup>55</sup> This meant that the French rule was not a real protectorate. It involved an emphasis on the vices of the old system and an eradication of its virtues, for why should a mandarin exert himself for the benefit of the

<sup>55</sup> Doumer (1905), *op. cit.*, p. 163.

foreigners at Hué? The Residents, therefore, overlooked matters but had no effective checks. "We limited ourselves to a rudimentary protectorate which was not interested in the welfare or economic development of the country," reported Doumer, and thus the drift continued. The trouble was largely that the French treaty-rights were restricted, and it was virtually impossible to interfere in native policy or internal administration, and, without such interference, economic advance was out of the question in a country where prosperity meant additional mulcting by the mandarins.

Doumer therefore arranged for a more direct and immediate form of control. He kept the royal power, because he saw the inadvisability of breaking the old tradition of Imperial rule and leaving the religion of the whole Annamite race without a tangible head. At the same time, he made it clear that this was not equivalent to a recognition of stultification. The monarchy had to become efficient and progressive. This end he secured by his reorganization of September, 1897, which increased the number of Residents and conferred on them real powers of direction. The old secret council, the *Comat*, which had been such a centre of reactionary intrigue, was totally abolished, and was replaced by a Council of Ministers, under the Resident-Superior. Doumer thus sought to centralize Annamite administration and to make it efficient by reducing the apathy and abuses of the mandarins whom he was compelled to leave as before in the provinces. In 1898, he completed the change by giving France a direct control of Annam's finances,—a step which left no doubt as to the mastery of the situation. Annam was thus hastily dragooned into the path of advance, and Doumer looked to his Residents at Hué and in the provinces to keep her there.

This effected, he could turn to Tonkin, the last and the most difficult of the peninsular-States, and that in which the past record was a greater obstacle than in any other.<sup>56</sup> Tonkin was nominally a protectorate with a little more control than in Annam, but in reality was very much of a directly ruled colony. It was more of a Cochin-China than an Annam. Mandarins were retained in the provinces, but only because the French *personnel* was insufficient to manage the details of administration there, and they were rather shackled native auxiliaries than mandarins in the old sense. The real power lay with the Residents, every instinct of whose training was to administer on the Algerian model. Keeping administration in their own hands, they left justice to the mandarins, because they could not do this themselves. The only variant from the norm of a directly ruled colony was that the French did not understand enough Annamite to judge the natives. This is what the vaunted

<sup>56</sup> Doumer (1905), *op. cit.*, pp. 140, 295 *et seq.*

protectorate-theory meant by 1897. Doumer even found that the French were doing their best to destroy the particularly virile system of local government,—that system of communes which was perhaps the dominant note in Annamite organization. Each village had been a tiny republic, each Council of Notables had secured order and progress: and there seemed not the slightest need of interfering with this structure, save that it possessed the cardinal vice of being native! Yet the Residents were trying to obliterate the village communes in Tonkin, as they had already done in Cochin-China.

Doumer took decisive steps to change this position. He suppressed the *Kinh-Luoc* or Viceroy, that phantom ruler whom his predecessors had set up in Tonkin and who had neither traditional authority nor moral value nor practical interest. Then, he told the Residents that their functions were to guide and direct, and not to throttle, the mandarins. So long as the latter were administering to the welfare of their charges, no interference was necessary. He restored to them administrative as well as judicial functions and really made them the provincial rulers. In Cambodia and Annam, it had been necessary to give the Residents a more conspicuous place: here, Doumer had to push them back and assert the mandarins against them. At the same time, he recognized afresh the power of the local communes, thus reverting to Paul Bert's basic principle. Each village was again given charge of communal affairs, and Tonkinese organization reverted to its original form of a loose confederacy of self-governing local units. Doumer not only restored the communes, but actually enlarged their powers, as he could see no reason why their local rights should be in any wise fettered. Thus, they collected taxes, managed schools, controlled charities, decided local policy, kept order in the municipality, and corresponded with the Government through the mandarin. By thus retaining mandarins and communes, Doumer again made the administration of Tonkin self-working, limiting the French part to intervention wherever the machinery broke down.

This organization of the various States was completed by the end of 1897. Cochin-China was recognized as a directly administered French colony: Cambodia was a loose protectorate: Annam, though also a protectorate, had more direct and immediate control: and Tonkin was a self-governing country with organization centring on the communes and the *litrati*, and Residents supervising the whole. After this, Doumer had the necessary data for his federal scheme, and could go on to evolve a system which could at once take cognizance of these local variations and yet allow the federal body to be the directing force in Indo-Chinese affairs.

He had no hesitation in deciding for the central government. When he came, a federal administration was practically non-existent. The only Government-General was himself and an archivist without archives ! The Governor-General had hitherto been only the administrator of Tonkin, with a wider title than his colleagues : but Doumer resolved "to govern everywhere and administer nowhere." He was to decide policy all over the Union, and the States were all to be subsidiary to him. This meant a complete reversal of the existing situation, and was perhaps the boldest step that Doumer took, because it at once raised against him the various localist forces, especially in Cochinchina.

First, by setting up a separate Resident-Superior in Tonkin, he withdrew himself from a particular association with any one province. Then, in September, 1897, he instituted a *Conseil Supérieur* for the whole of Indo-China, as the existing body was purely a nominal one. But, before he could secure his Council, he had to manufacture the electorate. At this early date, individual representation was unheard of in colonies of the Indo-Chinese type, and only the representation of bodies was allowed. But even the bodies were non-existent. Therefore, he had to inaugurate mixed Chambers of Agriculture and Commerce in Annam and Cambodia and arrange for the representation of the separate Chambers in the older States. The delegates of these Chambers, when met in Council, were to discuss general economic matters and, in particular, vote on the Federal Budget. French colonial theory in 1897 did not recognize the need of having any discussion of political matters : hence the predominantly economic nature of the Council. Doumer went on to complete the federal structure by setting up the various services, instituting the Customs on the changed basis, and providing for the Budget. He reserved to the Federal Budget customs, communications, public works, judicial matters, and "civil affairs" in general, the range of these functions making it very clear that the provinces were no longer to be independent. Cochinchina perceived this immediately. Its Colonial Council refused outright to accept the Federal reforms, and it was not until Doumer secured the assent of the Council of Ministers in Paris (July, 1898) that the matter was decided. The decision meant that federalism, in its most rigid form, was to triumph over provincial development. By the end of 1898, therefore, Doumer had evolved his Federal organization and had his various Ministries functioning. Indo-China was no longer a mere geographical expression but a governmental entity, and Doumer hoped to make it an economic entity as well.<sup>57</sup>

After 1898, interest thus came to centre on the Government-General,

<sup>57</sup> Doumer (1905), *op. cit.*, p. 287 *et seq.*



which decided the policy of the peninsula and controlled all economic matters. The Governor-General himself had the power of *all* the Ministers in Paris, and his only aid was from the *Conseil Supérieur*, which, beyond passing the budget, was a purely advisory body. Of the provinces, Cochinchina was directly administered on the African model by a Lieutenant-Governor and a Colonial Council elected by French citizens. The other three States, being protectorates and not colonies, were controlled by a Resident-Superior and local Residents. The only outside body was the *Conseil du Protectorat*, which consisted of officials and delegates of the Chambers of Commerce and Agriculture, and which passed the local budgets. But it was the federal body that counted. The Governor-General and the federal services were the centre of affairs, and even Cochinchina's obsession with its special rights as an assimilated colony could not avail in the changed state of things. Doumer had called a State into being in Indo-China, and the land had become an effectively organized unity.

#### ECONOMIC REFORMS

The bulk of the governmental reconstruction was over by the end of 1898 and needed only the passage of time for its consolidation. Doumer could then turn to grapple with the economic problems in which he was mainly interested and on which he had such positive ideas. Indeed, his governmental changes he viewed solely as preliminaries for the economic development of the country. They were his communications and his base for the real attack: acting from them, he was to transform the land's economic position, and until he attacked this, was only on the threshold.

When he arrived, the financial position of each of the States without exception was deplorable. Even Cochinchina, with its huge resources, had a deficit of a million piastres in 1896, and, although this was entirely unwarranted, it had detrimentally affected the credit of the country. The northern protectorates, Annam and Tonkin, had had a joint autonomous budget since 1887, the result being that by 1890 there was an accumulated deficit of 13 million francs. France had made the colony a present of this amount, but had to advance another twelve millions to remove the deficit of the next year. A third time, in 1895, 15 million francs had to be given, this time because of de Lanessan's huge programme of public-works.<sup>58</sup> Despite this, 1895 and 1896 again saw a deficit of over two million piastres, and the colony's finances were so low that, of

<sup>58</sup> See Doumer's explanation in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 30/6/95, or the Krantz Report in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., docts. parl., sess. ext., 1895, p. 1608.

a loan of 80 million francs which was authorized in 1896, no less than 43 millions had to go to pay off past obligations.<sup>59</sup> It was decidedly not a promising record that Doumer had to face, for the northern deficits seemed to be ingrained.

He at once attacked the problem. By making tax-collection more efficient and by instituting indirect taxes, he balanced the Tonkinese budget for 1897, paid off the previous year's deficit, and for the first time created a reserve. Yet, in addition to securing a credit-balance of four million piastres by 1898, he carried out public works on a more ambitious scale even than in de Lanessan's time. For instance, he commenced the first irrigation works, made a survey for the railways, and started the gigantic Hanoi bridge which was to open the way for direct communication from the Delta to the Chinese frontier. Successful in the local sphere, he went on to the Federal budget, but was at once faced by the problem of disposing of the tax-receipts. He finally decided that direct taxes were to go to local services, while indirect taxes should be retained for Federal purposes (July, 1898). From 1899 onwards, therefore, there was one general and six local budgets in Indo-China, and Doumer made them all flourish before he left. In less than five years, he had converted a dangerous financial position into five credit-balances, had secured a loan of 200 million francs for railways, had built canals and ports, had paid 14 million francs a year towards the colony's military expenses, and had a cash-reserve of 30 million francs. The peninsula had never been so well off.<sup>60</sup>

The only questionable part of his procedure was his inordinate stress on indirect taxes. He viewed these as "the most considerable resources on which we can count" and laid great emphasis on the State monopolies of opium, alcohol, and salt, from which he derived most of his revenue. The trouble was that, once these indirect taxes commenced, it was very difficult to change them. With opium, for instance, the State obtained almost nine million piastres by 1911, and the maintenance of the impost was determined, not by its social effects, but only by the fact that its suppression would involve "an enormous loss" for the Federal budget. So too with the alcohol monopoly. The State had a monopoly of manufacture after 1898 and of sale after 1911, and received an average return of 1½ million piastres (1903-1911). But the financial position was more than counterbalanced by the economic and political disturbances occasioned among the natives: indeed, much of the opposition to the

<sup>59</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 28/12/95, 11/2/96.

<sup>60</sup> G. Demorgny, *Les principales Réformes financières en Indo-chine de 1897 à 1900* (1900). Doumer's own account is in *L'Indo-Chine Française* (1905), p. 300. A good report is in *Le Régime des Protectorats*, 1899, Vol. I, p. 193.

Government rallied round this specific issue of alcohol, with the irritating right-of-search used in enforcing it. The State monopoly of selling salt was even worse, because it meant the practical disappearance of the salt-industry. With each of these three monopolies, the financial success had to be considered in conjunction with the effect on the natives politically and socially as well as economically.<sup>61</sup> Each article directly touched the native: hence, as the Annamite was prone to interpret the whole of French policy in terms of those parts with which he came intimately into contact, the taxes led to much anti-French feeling,—a feeling which almost faded into revolt under Doumer's successors.

But Doumer, aware as he was of these murmurings, tended rather to emphasize the old French adage about trying to make an omelette without breaking eggs; and, counting his financial position assured, went on to the railway-project of 1898. Looking far into the future, he planned a whole network of railways running through the peninsula, and strenuously contended that development from the first had to be in accord with a general plan. "We must know what we are going to do and where we are going," he argued, and drew up a scheme for no less than 3,000 kilometres of line (December, 1897).<sup>62</sup> Deterred a little by the misgivings of his *Conseil Supérieur*, he finally compromised on 1,700 kilometres at a cost of 200 million francs,—an unheard-of sum in the French colonies of last century. It is perhaps the best commentary on his forcefulness simply to record that he obtained a law sanctioning a loan for this amount in 1898—at the hour of the Fashoda reverse and a new phase of the Dreyfus crisis, and when the word "loan" sounded ill in Parliamentary ears.<sup>63</sup> Three years later he again fought through a Bill in the face of lively opposition, this time for the extension of the Tonkin Railway into Yunnan.<sup>64</sup> By 1901, that is, he had planned and provided for a railway programme that would take at least a decade to execute,—and all in a time when French opinion viewed colonial railways as a costly phantasy.

Doumer's real work ended with this achievement. The realization of his financial and railway schemes was to come under his successors: he had simply prepared the way. It is easy to see, however, how his five years marked the turning-point in the history of the colony. He had replaced vacillation by a decided policy, he had enforced a consistent scheme of reform for five uninterrupted years, he had implanted

<sup>61</sup> The monopoly question is examined in A. Métin, *L'Indo-Chine et l'Opinion* (1916), pp. 165-189; or Préssensé's interpellation in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 3/4/09; or L. Vignon (1919), *op. cit.*, p. 451 *et seq.*

<sup>62</sup> Doumer (1905), *op. cit.*, p. 325 *et seq.* See Map No. 20, p. 453.

<sup>63</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., sess. ext., 1898, docts. parl., pp. 341, 423 *et seq.*

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, Deps., 19/3/01.

his reforms so firmly that not even incompetent successors could prevent their operation. He had saved Indo-China despite itself and in the face of opposition both at home and in the colony. In short, he had made the youngest and most attacked of French colonies the most successful. He had created a federal government and organized the local administrations. He had made six budgets so that it would be difficult to obtain deficits, and he had created a taxation-system that was a most efficient source of revenue, whatever its other results were. He had laid the basis of the railway-system and provided money for his successors to complete the scheme. He had increased commerce from 170 to 363 million francs, and had trebled the French share in this,—a formidable record.

It was but natural that such a comprehensive policy should have many drawbacks. Doumer, by his very nature, over-emphasized the need of organizing matters afresh from top to bottom, and he was wont to neglect certain phases of development. His genius was essentially for the direction of finance and public-works, and this came to mean that he neglected agriculture in a country which was, after all, primarily agricultural. He went even further than this with local industries and held that any industry competing with the mother-country should be positively banned.<sup>65</sup> The result was that such enterprises as the Hongay coal-mining and the cement-works at Haiphong had to emerge in the face of his opposition; and the colony, though suitable for industrialization, was for many years held back by this attitude.

Similarly, he neglected land-settlement. Though the area granted to Europeans increased from 80,861 hectares in 1896 to 357,481 in 1901, there was little increase in *peuplement*. Free-grant was the rule, and some colonists obtained more than 20,000 hectares. The grantee simply installed natives on the land and drew part of the profits. There was no intensive cultivation by modern methods, but simply a continuation of the old, with the insertion of European *entrepreneurs* in an already over-populated land. Only twelve per cent. of the area ceded was cultivated by 1901, and nothing had been done towards the introduction of new crops.<sup>66</sup>

Doumer thus failed to promote industry and agriculture, and, at times, what was termed "his suspicious and excessively meticulous administration" neglected the needs of commerce. He subordinated all of these things to the necessity of obtaining revenue for the Government, and it can with justice be asserted that his policy was unduly fiscal, even to the point at which it became anti-developmental. On the

<sup>65</sup> Doumer (1905), *op. cit.*, p. 361.

<sup>66</sup> F. Bernard (1901), *op. cit.*, pp. 132-141.

other hand, he had reformed finance and provided reserves for those who came after him, and they could, by taking advantage of the reforms he had brought about, extend development along the lines he neglected. He had created the country's credit and an atmosphere of optimism,—both of which were non-existent features when he came : and it is directly to his work in promoting unity, in developing the budgets, and in carrying out his railway-scheme that the self-sufficiency of Indo-China since his day has been due. He made the land as we know it to-day, and his name is as much associated with Indo-China as Cambon's is with Tunisia or Galliéni's with Madagascar. The Radical exile had justified himself and had given France the best of her colonies.<sup>67</sup>

### V. Native Policy after Doumer

After Doumer left, interest centred once more on native problems, because the very prosperity of the natives made them more assertive and they had so far shed their complex of unreasoning obedience to authority that they went too far in the opposite direction of claiming privileges.

The obvious feature in these years was a general *malaise* which is the nearest a Chinese population gets to that reckless abandon which suddenly flares up in a massacre. It was a general simmering of discontent, the more disquietening because it was under the surface and with all the intensity of a repressed tendency. Its nature was best summed up by a Francophile Annamite official, who said to de Lanessan in 1905 that,—

“ There is no piracy as formerly, but discontent reigns in every class of the Annamite population. The King has no longer any authority : the mandarins, deprived of moral direction, are dissatisfied at not having powers which would permit them to aid the Residents in native administration : while the people are impoverished by taxes which mount ceaselessly and very rapidly. This dull discontent of the people, moreover, has been excited by the recent victory of the Japanese. In my opinion, the actual situation is much more difficult than it was formerly. Then there were only a few bandits who ravaged the country, the rest of the population favouring France : but now, the discontent is general. *I fear for the future.*”

“ Dull discontent ” is exactly the phrase for this widening gap between French and natives. There was a clear drifting-apart. The natives could not understand the whims and changing policies of the French : and, for their part, the French did not understand the Annamite soul, and, arguing from the analogy of “ boys ” and prostitutes, came once more to despise the natives. Both sides steadily hated and despised the other, and the gap grew.

<sup>67</sup> See Étienne's summary of his work in preface to Néton (1904), *op. cit.*, p. viii.

The position of the mandarins at once reflected this cleavage. They had not been properly reinstated in Tonkin, and the whole gist of Doumer's fiscal policy had been in favour of a more direct control of native affairs, however much its author believed in a powerful mandarinat. Tonkin was again becoming closer to Cochinchina, and such native officials as there were were more and more ostracized.<sup>68</sup> Perhaps no other policy was possible in Tonkin, because of the differences from Annam. In Annam there was not the same immediate incentive for direct intervention, but in Tonkin the absence of a local class of trained officials could not be counteracted, and, if untrained officials were employed, there naturally had to be constant supervision. This became more noticeable when Doumer's fiscal policy emphasized efficiency above everything else, and when French colonists increased in the Delta, and piracy once more gathered strength in the mountains. The mandarins found themselves a declining force, and, even if nominally retained, divested of their functions as they had been after de Lanessan had left the country. The Residents were substituted for the native officials instead of working with them. As Gervais, the Budget Reporter, told the Senate in May, 1913, the result was that, instead of an organized people connected with the Government through the intermediary of the *littérati*, there had come to be only an amorphous mass of twenty million human beings, disillusioned and at least passively hostile.<sup>69</sup>

Aiding this tendency was the influence of the indirect taxes. Doumer had based his calculations on the unusually good harvests of his earlier years and had not reckoned on the abnormal degree of corruption that was to arise. In consequence, the burden became increasingly intolerable, especially because it irritated the people. The household searches in preventing evasions of the alcohol-monopoly became the most voiced grievance of the Annamites, and this in itself, whether justified or not, took away any justification the tax may have had. As a matter of fact, the native complaint that they were over-taxed had little real support. The aggregate yield was huge, it is true (36 million francs a year), but it must be remembered that this was spread over an unusually dense population. The individual Annamite paid less than any other French native, except the Indian and the Malagasian; and their 7.93 francs compared well with the 7.50 francs taken by the English in India, or the 11.22 francs of Burma or the 48.25 francs of British Borneo.<sup>70</sup> The grievance was thus more psychological than financial, but it was none the less real.

<sup>68</sup> For Beau's stand against this, see important article in *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, 10/2/06, p. 73.

<sup>69</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Senate, 27/5/13; compare Gaisman, *L'Œuvre Française au Tonkin* (1906), p. 130, or Métin (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>70</sup> A. de Pourvoirville, *L'Asie Française* (1911), pp. 178-180.

Then came the influence of the Russo-Japanese War and the organization of Siam, both of them leading to an "Asia for the Asiatics" movement. The Annamites had given European ideas a fair trial, they considered. They had not arrogantly disdained the new customs, but had been curious and attentive. They had an unmistakable power of assimilation and a desire to learn and imitate. But they were extremely sensitive and, gentle though they were, were particularly attached to their traditions and civilization. Their racial pride once touched, they became intractably impervious to Occidental influences and filled with a bitterly ferocious, if repressed, hatred. They would borrow from another civilization, they admitted, but it was a gentleman's part to respect his friend's culture, even while admitting its differences: and France failed to do this, with a people who were nothing if not courtly. Moreover, when it came to actual competition, had not Mukden demonstrated that "a yellow skin is worth something," they wanted to know? The boasted superiority of European civilization which the French had insisted on viewing as the basis of their action in Indo-China was thus placed in jeopardy; and, as Fabre showed in his play, *Les Sauterelles*, the conduct of the average representative of this great civilization was not such as to make the Annamite forsake the culture of his gods and his fathers. As a result of these tendencies, a curious inversion had emerged by about 1910. The Annamites were holding themselves apart and disdainful, convinced that their civilization and their ways were preferable to those of the French, and, in general, comporting themselves with that air of ineffable aloofness so readily implanted by a belief in racial superiority.

The tendency was aided at this specific juncture by the social changes brought about in Annamite life by economic development. An Asiatic civilization, immobile and based on the submergence of the individual, had been suddenly brought into contact with European ideas of individualization. Aloofness in this connection was out of the question. The Delta, the key of the land, was transformed, and methods of production tended to change everywhere. The rate of cultural evolution, or rather destruction, was thus forced. It became almost a truism that a native's iconoclasm was in direct proportion to his economic advancement, and unfortunately, such iconoclasm came to be identified with the desirable quality of adaptability. A native who turned his back on his past was deemed to be progressing. This meant that the younger generations became sneeringly sceptical of their past, but, finding that isolation from their own world by no means implied entrance to the new Occidental world, they became potential rebels. Hence the rise of the "Young Annamites." Hence, too, the connection between industrializa-

tion and individualism and an assertive national patriotism.<sup>71</sup> As long as social life was bounded by the village, as long as a young man measured success in terms of the approbation of his elders in the Council of Notables, then so long was the concept of a nation out of the question. The land was really a *congeries* of tiny republics. But the economic life of the Occident, especially in Cochin-China and Tonkin, changed all this, and, by enfranchising, or really creating, the individual, incidentally gave rise to a wider political perception. This was naturally more noticeable in the urban areas where native life became more quickly disintegrated, and where the hopelessness of the masses made them ready material for seditious purposes. But, even in the uplands, the economic changes spelt disintegration, and this went hand in hand with anti-French agitation.

Hitherto, the French had added to their despal of the natives a feeling that, even if they *did* misgovern, no retribution could touch them. "There is nothing in common between the various peoples, or their ideas or methods. There is no native public opinion, there probably never will be one. Thus a general rising is not possible."<sup>72</sup> That was the prevalent French attitude: but it quite neglected the artificial nationality that was emerging, the community of grievances that was giving rise to a community of political interests, and the way in which the Annamites were invoking their cultural past for propaganda purposes. In 1908, for instance, there was an ominous spirit of unrest throughout the land. The pirates became a nuisance again in Upper Tonkin: all of Quang-nan province in Annam was in passive revolt against the rice- and head-taxes, and the French Residency at Faifou was invaded: there was a conspiracy down south in Cochin-China and the people construed the failure to convict as a sign of weakness. Still more important, the malcontents plotted to burn Hanoi, the capital. The towns in general were restive, and the French gave way to a panic.<sup>73</sup> An executive "Criminal Commission" was set up to ensure summary justice and to prevent such fiascos as the failure to punish the Cochin-Chinese plotters. But, as events turned out, it only aided the natives, because they knew that it was a panic-measure. Had it been set up permanently in a dignified manner, it would have been a salutary social measure: introduced in a panic and without that decorum which is so essential in a Chinese community, it was the reverse of politic.

<sup>71</sup> *L'Asie Française*, Nov. 1920, p. 363.

<sup>72</sup> de Pourvoirville (1911), *op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>73</sup> Details of these events are in *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, 1908, pp. 291, 426, 528, 1072, and the last outbreak in *L'Asie Française*, Sept. 1913. Messimy's colonial-budget reports for 1909-1910 (in his *Notre Œuvre Coloniale*, p. 70) analyse the discontent.



Over against these discontented natives were the unsympathetic French officials. Officialdom was the bane of the land.<sup>74</sup> They were steadily increasing in number (from 2,860 in 1897 to 5,683 in 1911), and as steadily weakening in type. They cost 35 million piastres a year,—that is, a quarter of the total budget-receipts, and it was estimated that at least two-thirds of them could have been dispensed with, especially the European proletariat who received about £120 a year. No other colonial Power used European officials for lowly work of this nature, and it was absurd to argue that natives were not available for it. All of these officials, great and small alike, were hopelessly alienated from a real understanding of native affairs. In 1911, for instance, the Annamite language of Tonkin was purely spoken by only three French administrators, and France had stationed one of these in Cambodia, where the language is utterly different. Only nine per cent. knew a smattering sufficient for everyday needs, and 91 per cent. knew none at all! Herein was largely the explanation of the gap between French and natives.<sup>75</sup> Clémentel had issued instructions in 1905, insisting that the higher officials at least should be able to understand native dialects, but only with the result seen above.<sup>76</sup> There was adequate provision for such training,—on the statute-book, a field in which France left scarcely any gaps!

It was plain by about 1910, therefore, that some change had to come, and that Doumer's policy of reform on fiscal lines had been accompanied by, if it was not indeed one of the leading causes of, native discontent.<sup>77</sup> It was seen that French rule had been based on the exclusion of the natives, whereas the only progressive method was to secure the collaboration of each race, even of the backward Laos-men. Development to be effective had to be mutual. Hence arose the policy of association, which, somewhat tardily, was so much stressed in Indo-China after this date. "We must associate the Annamite people in our civilizing work," de Lanessan had written in 1905, and there had to be "association of interests, of intelligences, and of races." Develop the natives in the light of their own civilization,—argued the theorists: and there was a low but very significant murmur by the financial experts that such development and association would produce positive economies. It would be a good stroke of business. But it was the clear failure of the existing policy that actually decided the change, because *laissez-faire* or mere continuance was out of the question.

<sup>74</sup> Messimy's report, p. 147 *et seq.*; Métin (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>75</sup> de Pourvoirville (1911), *op. cit.*, p. 143; Chailley's attacks in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 17/11/08.

<sup>76</sup> *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, 22/11/08, p. 1018.

<sup>77</sup> Messimy Report, *op. cit.*, p. 196 *et seq.*

A start had been made in the new direction in Tonkin in 1907, when an Advisory Council of native notables had been instituted to aid the ordinary financial Council. This was the first recognition that the Government needed any aid from outside in determining its policy, especially as concerned the natives. In addition, the provinces of Tonkin had elected commissions of regional notables, but this concession was unique, and the other States had nothing like it. Annam and Cambodia remained as they were after Doumer's reorganization of 1897, and Cochin-China was as inertly official as ever. It had a Mixed Council, in which 8,000 Frenchmen had twice as many representatives as three million natives. The obvious solution of two Chambers on the Tunisian model, one for Frenchmen and the other for foreigners, was not entertained, nor was there any effort to extend even the limited representation of Tonkin to Cochin-China. The gap between foreigners and natives still remained, and it was useless to speak of association when the Government would not bridge this gap or utilize the mandarins or native communes in any effective manner.

The country seemed at its nadir under Governor-General Klobukowsky (1908-1911), but the attacks of Messimy and Viollette in the Deputies secured the appointment of Albert Sarraut, who went out pledged to allay the native drift, and to start a native policy on the principles of de Lanessan and the bases of Beau. The position of the natives was unquestionably deplorable: as a mass, they were either apathetic or covertly hostile to France: but Sarraut, a leader of the new *association* school, was viewed as another Paul Bert or de Lanessan. He at once emphasized the native view-point and cleared away as many as possible of those obstacles which had hitherto stopped reform. He purged the Civil Service of what was called "the French administrative proletariat," throwing open the posts thus vacated to the natives. This not only secured cheapness and efficiency: it at once brought home to the natives the reality of their co-operation in the work of government, and placed them on something of a par with the Indians and Javanese.<sup>78</sup> After this, Sarraut enforced Clémentel's neglected decree on the teaching of native languages, insisting that the officials could not understand their charges, and still less secure their sympathy, unless they could dispense with interpreters.

But this was only the fringe of the problem, for Sarraut soon saw that, however much the natives emphasized their political wrongs and groaned about Doumer's indirect taxes, these were not the root of the

<sup>78</sup> See Lebrun on Sarraut's work in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 20/12/12, or *Colonies et Marine*, 1922, p. 567.

matter. Indeed, the phenomenal economic advance of all classes since Doumer's time disproved these grumblings. Where the most immediate problem lay was in the world of justice. Here, the keynote was that struck in Pierre Mille's horrible tale, *Justice*, which showed to how great an extent flesh and blood were openly sacrificed to the letter of a Parisian code. Even the principles were not uniform. Some parts saw assimilation, others had myriads of fluctuating policies, everywhere the text and the application of the law were different; and, in all, Indo-China was a veritable legal quagmire.<sup>79</sup> The position was absurd. Indo-China was a country that called for decisions in accord with the tangled traditions and religion of the people. Everything was deep-rooted in the cultural past and meaningless apart from the maze of custom. Yet France had done nothing to meet the situation, or even to secure a uniformity in her policies that did *not* meet the situation. In Cochinchina, both the French civil and criminal codes had been introduced in 1881 and were still in force. A land-matter involving centuries of Chinese traditions would therefore be settled by a French magistrate with the same manuals of law employed in the suburbs of Paris. Local conditions were surmounted by being ignored. Since the natives dwelt in a colony assimilated to France, it was held that they should either endeavour to understand French law, or, if they could not do so, appreciate the honour and accept the result! In Tonkin the position was not as bad. Here, there was a compromise between old and new. The mandarins were supposed to administer local law, but, as a result of the innumerable changes in policy, the degree of European interference varied with the personality of every Resident. On the whole, however, the French magistrates exercised less judicial authority than in Cochinchina, although the uncertainty of the position was detrimental to justice. In Annam, native justice was entirely in the hands of the mandarins, and the Code Gui-Long, the basis of Annamite law, had been codified by a special commission. As regards the whole of Indo-China, the position thus meant that each province had a different solution for precisely the same issue, and obviously all could not be correct.<sup>80</sup>

The conflict was between the Cochinchinese and Tonkinese systems,—that is, between the ideas of assimilation and a protectorate. Sarraut naturally adopted the latter, but was faced by considerable opposition. The French belief in the universality of the *Code Civile* dies hard, and it was not until a Royal ordinance of July, 1917, that Tonkinese

<sup>79</sup> Girault (1923), 2.1.557, for a good account.

<sup>80</sup> A summary of the different solutions is in Girault, 2.1.561. The position is attacked in L. Vignon (1919), *op. cit.*, p. 345 *et seq.*

justice could be reorganized.<sup>81</sup> The result was a compromise as before, but one more favourable to the natives. It was admitted that French law could not meet the situation, and that in itself was an advance : on the other hand, the French were adamant that the illogicalities and imperfections of Annamite law could not be tolerated. There were certain basic differences that had to be settled. Annamite law confused law and morality, as was natural in a community where religion impinged on civil life. It was social rather than individual, transactional rather than absolute. It took into account attenuating factors and social conditions, and mixed up administrative and legal phases. The French, for their part, insisted that law was utterly distinct from morality, and that the prelude to any reform had to be a recognition of the principle of the separation of powers,—a decision hotly contested by the natives as inequitable and even irreligious.

Moreover, the French said that the mandarins could not at the one time be judges and administrators,—but this again was in direct conflict with native ideas, for was not the mandarin the head of his family and the decider of all things ? Despite this complaint, the French instituted a hierarchy of “judicial mandarins,” in nine grades, as distinct from the administrative mandarins.<sup>82</sup> Yet they recognized the danger of forcing the rate of change, especially in view of the native attitude, so that these reforms were not completed until 1923, and at every stage, mandarins and magistrates and administrators worked in a Joint Commission.

The upshot is that the law of Tonkin is now administered by specialized native officers, and the law itself, while fully taking into account local conditions and native codes, is yet compatible in its essentials with French law. The French have seen that it is the spirit, and not the letter, of their law that counts. There is thus no attempt to introduce French laws themselves, as in Cochin-China ; it is only the basic principles, the ideas indispensable for justice, that have been fused into the general Annamite structure. The resultant law is an advance on anything the French Empire has hitherto known,—clearly an advance on the French Civil Law enforced in Algeria and Cochin-China, and even on the compromise of French criminal and native civil law so favoured in the African colonies. The Tonkinese system is more conducive to efficiency and equity, while it in no wise sacrifices the peculiarities of native custom.

Some experts, the jurist Fournier-Vally for instance, consider that the new Code had unduly forced the rate of evolution. They hold that

<sup>81</sup> *L'Asie Française*, Dec. 1920, pp. 404, 410. The result for the civil law is in Dareste, *Recueil Colonial*, 1919, p. 110, and, for the criminal, in *Journal Officiel de l'Indo-Chine*, 16/11/21.

<sup>82</sup> For classes of mandarins, see *Journal Officiel de l'Indo-Chine*, 22/3/19, 22/9/20.

it has too strictly separated law and morality, and that such a separation tends to accentuate the social drift which is such a problem in Indo-China and to complicate the problems of the individual who is asserting himself. In a community which is changing from a system based on the family-unit to one on an individual basis, as is the Annamite, general social conditions—what might be called the changing group-morality of the moment—have to be taken into account. As a case in point, the new Code bases its punishment for adultery and filial disobedience on the French model, quite neglecting the fact that the entire basis of Annamite social life depends on the principle of family-authority. It is clear that the old arrangements in this connection could no longer meet the situation, because of the changes during the last twenty years: but, on the other hand, the freeing of every young Annamite from the parental authority, when he reaches the age of twenty-one, is inept and revolutionary.<sup>83</sup> It considers the goal of the social evolution that is taking place in connection with individualism, instead of the stage that has been reached at present, and thus places a premium on anti-social change. Obviously, the old Annamite penalty of strangulation could not hold in a community impregnated by French ideas for forty years, but, to the Annamite, the new provision of a short-term imprisonment seems to mean the conferring of a State *imprimatur* on social disintegration. In the main, however, the Code is based on a workable compromise, although it is perhaps less elastic than the old. But, where the fundamental need is to prevent abuse, elasticity is only a minor consideration, and it must be admitted that, in general, the Tonkinese Code is far in advance of the customary French ideas.<sup>84</sup>

By the time this reform was secured, Sarraut's term had expired, and Maurice Long, the deputy of la Drome, was carrying on his work (1919-1923). The problem that had confronted Sarraut was judicial: that with which Long had to deal was political, because the war had once more forced political discontent into a state of prominence. Sarraut had rightly postponed the issue; now his successor had to face it.<sup>85</sup> He prepared the ground for this by his fight for the recovery of the piastre and the acceptance of a local loan by the natives, thus approaching the more intangible political issues by emphasizing the undoubted prosperity of the people.<sup>86</sup> There was no doubt that the Annamites were the most prosperous of all the French natives, but this fact seemed only to make their political demands more vociferous. They demanded a

<sup>83</sup> *L'Asie Française*, Nov. 1920, p. 365.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 1924, pp. 29, 30.

<sup>85</sup> For Long's work, see *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 19/1/23, or Angoulvant in *Colonies et Marine*, Aug. 1922, pp. 566-579.

<sup>86</sup> *Colonies et Marine*, 1922, pp. 539, 573-576.

political status compatible with their changed economic position, claiming that they had either had too great political privileges in the past or too few at present. And, as the former suggestion was a mockery, the reformers insisted that logic (and *intelligentsia*-trained natives are nothing if not superficially logical) necessitated a change.

The demands could be divided into three categories. The first and most justified were the small concessions sought in the local regions. The old system of communes was changing. New economic and social forces had emerged to make it anomalous. Organization fitted for a society based on the family-group was unsuited for an aggressively individualistic society; and naturally the Councils of Notables came to be centres of reactionary forces, vainly trying to eradicate the social disruption and stigmatizing any change from the good old days as disintegration. They were archaic, oligarchical, and no longer represented the interests of the villagers.<sup>87</sup> Long therefore set up "communal administrative councils," elected on a fairer basis, and provided with communal budgets so that they would be the effective forces in each local district (1921-1922). The only opposition came from those who profited by the anarchy of village finances and the old "diehards" who lived in a world that had gone. The reform was in general popular, and now practically all Annamite villages have elected administrative councils, and there are over 2,000 communal budgets. Paul Bert's theory of local self-government has thus been re-vitalized and brought up to date, and the genius of the Annamite for group-democracy once more vindicated.

More difficult were the wider claims for a general representation of all natives in the government of the country. The educated "Young Annamites" were not very interested in the communal reforms, because local politics were rather outside their ken. They were statesmen, not councillors! They were concerned with the national stage, and concentrated on an extension of native representation in Tonkin and its introduction in an effective form in the other states. After 1920 they were joined by the Chambers of Commerce and Agriculture; and even the French Press argued that the existing Councils, however much they may have met the requirements of Doumer's time, were clearly anomalous after the economic changes in the interim. In 1922, therefore, Long promised Cochinchina a body like the *Délégations Financières* of Algeria,—that is, a dual body, representing French and native interests in separate sections. By the decree of June, 1922, which reformed the Colonial Council along these lines, the French still retained a majority of members, but the significant feature about the new body was that it

<sup>87</sup> *L'Asie Française*, May 1922, p. 218.

was elected on the basis of individual representation,—quite a new political principle in so far as the natives of Indo-China were concerned.<sup>88</sup> Previously, representatives had been chosen from a college consisting of a delegate from each Council of Notables: there was thus an indirect representation of the village communes. Now, however, taxpayers were to vote directly, and this meant the enfranchisement of 20,822 electors. The functions of the Council did not change: the important features of the reform were rather structural,—in the increase of the native representatives from six to ten, and the recognition of the principle of individual voting.<sup>89</sup>

Clearly, the reform movement was proceeding by leaps and bounds, but, when it entered the still wider national field and demanded something approaching a national autonomy, French policy halted. The French were prepared to give complete self-government in the communes and a gradually developing representation in the provinces, but they insisted that the Government-General had to remain responsible for federal policy. It was admitted by all that the existing *Conseil du Gouvernement* was inadequate. It was practically an official body, and, even so, only a registering chamber; and obviously the need was for a real elected assembly that could speak for the people. Long, before his death, had promised such an assembly, and Merlin, his successor, admitted that the Government Council, as constituted in 1911, no longer corresponded to the needs of the country or to the facts brought about by the war, or to the progress of Indo-China. But the difficulty was to know what to do, as French colonial theory had not yet advanced to the stage of countenancing any degree of responsible government in the colonies. Long, for his part, had fought for autonomy. While taking a clear stand against any form of independence, he claimed that “the moment has come for Indo-China to live its own life,” “that Indo-China is a State and no longer a colony,” and that it had to have its own policy in every direction, its own money and loans and navy. No questioning of French sovereignty was implied in this attitude, which was simply a demand for something like the Dominion-status of the British colonies. It was clearly laid down, even by Maurice Long, that France was in no sense to abdicate her authority.<sup>90</sup> The natives were not to be supreme.

Long asserted time and again that naturalization had to be the exception rather than the rule and that most of the natives had to remain in their present position. The balance of power within Indo-China

<sup>88</sup> Angoulvant in *Colonies et Marine*, Aug. 1922, pp. 568-570.

<sup>89</sup> *L'Asie Française*, Sept.-Oct. 1922, p. 347.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 1922, p. 58; Feb. 1924, p. 75.

was to remain much the same as before : a little more scope was to be given to the educated natives, and much more to the Government-General, which represented Indo-China as a whole. That was all. As Sarraut said :—

"The local organ of government which presides over Indo-China's development must clearly remain under the control of the motherland, but the true power of decision must rest on the spot in Indo-China. At present, it is not there, despite the solemn affirmations of a logical decentralization of the Government-General. This Government has only a precarious authority, delegated by texts which allow the mother-country to withhold with one hand the power it gives with the other. Theory says one thing, practice sees quite the contrary."<sup>1</sup>

The colony thus demands responsible government such as the British colonies obtained in 1853.<sup>2</sup> It has had it for some time on the financial side, at least to the extent of discussing its budget : now, it demands a real self-government both here and in the political field. But it must be noted that this movement, though given its original impetus by the native demand for self-expression, has become more than a native question, and indeed, in so far as the natives themselves are concerned, it has been decided that their participation in whatever change may come about in the federal organization is, while gradually extending, to be limited to the part they play in the provincial Governments,—that is, scope to express their opinions and needs, but, in general, no power of coming to decisions on questions of policy.

With these issues settled for the time being, the centre of interest in native matters has once more changed. Just as it moved from the vague unrest of 1901–1910 to the specific judicial question under Sarraut, and then to the political issue under Long, so now it has oscillated once more,—this time in the direction of providing increased economic opportunity by means of industrial education. Questions of status and representation are not as immediately important to the mass of the natives as is economic advancement, and it must be emphasized that this new turn is certainly healthier than the somewhat defiant demands of the earlier stages were. It represents a conscious striving instead of a disgruntled recklessness, and is at least constructive.

The outstanding facts in the colony's life at present are that agricultural methods are becoming transformed and that industry is more important here than in any other French colony. For both of these reasons, therefore, vocational education is of more than academic interest. Capital is superabundant (hence proposals to export some of it to

<sup>1</sup> *L'Asie Française*, Jan. 1921, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Gourdon's article in *Colonies et Marine*, Feb. 1921, p. 106.



aid French Oceania), and the future of the colony depends on one thing, —improving the quality of the labour-supply. Under the conditions, now that the general development has taught the native new needs and desires, this rests entirely with education. Professional education will complete the change, as was seen by Bouinas and Paulis as long ago as 1885, when they wrote: "let us raise them to us by a gradual apprenticeship, by the establishment of model agricultural and industrial schools."

Sarraut had commenced a practical turn in this direction by his decree of December, 1917, which systematized native education on the basis that instruction had to be in French, and, by implication, modernized. The Chinese character-schools had proven intractable: these new ones, therefore, were to be directly under the State. This reform, which spread so that by 1920 only Cambodia retained its old pagoda-schools, paved the way for the industrialization of education. "The question of professional education is more than ever the order of the day in Indo-China," reported the Governor-General to the *Conseil du Gouvernement* in 1923.<sup>93</sup> Up to that time, there had only been one industrial school at Hanoi, yet two States of the union at least were semi-industrialized. The provision was hopelessly inadequate, and even by the end of 1923, there were only eleven such schools with 1,091 students, —for a population of twenty millions. The natives, seeing how they are directly affected, are remarkably unified in their stand on this matter, and indeed have brought to it all the passion that formerly found expression in political agitation. Accepting the professional schools, they demanded the reversal of Sarraut's policy of instruction in French, and made it a matter of national pride, especially in Tonkin.<sup>94</sup>

There the matter rests. On the whole, it may be said that the native problem in Indo-China is not really serious. There is little of the open secession that is so obvious in Tunisia or of the passive hate that characterizes Algeria. In Indo-China the general *réveil* movement of Asiatic Powers naturally finds an echo, but it is difficult to make rebels of a prosperous peasantry. This might have been done in the years immediately after 1902, when they felt themselves ground down by the weight of Doumer's taxes and by the attack on their own mandarins and institutions. But now, with the mandarins restored and local self-government conceded, the position has changed. The ordinary Annamite, despite the ebullience of the foreign-educated minority, cares little about an adequate share in national government: so long as they have a vague participation which appeals to the spectacular side of their nature,

<sup>93</sup> *L'Asie Française*, April 1924, p. 171.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, May 1922, p. 216; July 1923, p. 324.

they are content, and probably do not understand even this (it was very difficult, for instance, to make the peasants grasp the nature of the village-reforms of 1923). The promise to make the existing representation more effective fully meets their desires, as there is no real national movement to control the government. It is the economic world that claims most attention. The peasant-proprietor, immobile for centuries, finds himself in the midst of an industrial revolution, and, now that the war-years have shown him that the changes are to his own immediate benefit, he devotes his whole attention to them, because, as has been seen, the Annamite can be attentive to change if convinced that that change is desirable. Hence the stress on education in the last few years, and on such matters as improved rice-methods, new crops, communications, credit-facilities, and the like. Economic transformation has been a distinct solvent of native grievances, and the new demands are not so much the result of oppression as of the self-consciousness of prosperity. The old claims were bitter demands from the depths of pessimism, the new ones simply a statement of the native's newly-felt importance. Complaints about deracialization and the plight of the mandarins, those bugbears of the past, no longer pertain to the position of to-day. Indeed, it may be said that native policy, as well as colonization in general, has become industrialized: and the native, finding his desires whetted, instead of, as formerly, thwarted, by the change, throws himself whole-heartedly into the work of bridging the chasm between patriarchal existence and industrialization, and in dealing with the myriads of questions that this raises in a society hitherto based on the rule of custom. The native problem, by being thrown largely on to the natives, and by reason of the economic changes and the increasing degree of individualism, has quite changed since 1910. Now, in the main, the emphasis is on co-operation, each side pursuing its own ends with the aid of the other; and the noisy but frothy independence movement finds itself isolated from the mass of the natives.

## VI. Economic Development

Up to Doumer's time, Indo-China had been little developed, save for the rice-industry in Cochin-China and, to a lesser degree, the exploitation of the Tonkin delta. Trade had been set back by the "assimilation" of the colony to France in 1892,—an especially heavy blow in a country which depended on a local Oriental market and which could under no conditions be made a commercial dependency of France. Rice was practically the only crop: industry was non-existent; commerce was not progressing. There were only 800 European civilians in the land, and these had failed to settle down to agricultural pursuits: over against

them were twenty million natives, sullen and unprogressive, living as their ancestors did and seeing no reason why they should change their methods of production. Their minds wallowed in inertness just as their bodies did in the rice-swamps. Even Doumer's five years of reorganization left this position little changed in its essentials. He created credit, it is true, and thus cleared the way for a doubling of commerce, but, to counteract this, he discouraged industry and neglected agriculture. He failed to make alienation of land mean settlement, in so far as the Europeans were concerned, and worst of all, left the native body, by reason of his taxes and political changes, more disaffected than when he came.

Under these conditions, it was his successors who had to bear the brunt of the situation. When Beau followed him in 1901, for instance, he had a sound financial position, a growing trade, and a progressive policy of communications; but all of these had adversely affected the native and passed over the country's primary production. Public works had gone on at the cost of agriculture instead of concurrently with it: hence, Beau had not only to carry on Doumer's ambitious programme of railways, but also to revive agriculture and industry to keep pace with the general progress of the country. Doumer had tended to make the economic state of the country unduly artificial and to divorce his public-works from the facts of the situation. Beau, for his part, had to perform the graceless task of bringing all these sets of facts into line again.<sup>95</sup>

By 1901, therefore, if the railway-issue had been decided, that of agriculture was just beginning. Emphasis was on new crops, fresh methods, irrigation, agricultural schools, and a turn to the experience of India and Java,—and point was given to this position by the bad harvests that followed Doumer's five good years and by the disquieting fall of the piastre. Indo-China was slipping back,—back from Doumer's forced progress to the position of agriculture which, at that time, was the direct gauge of the country's welfare. The federal budget had deficits from 1902 to 1906, and, at the same time as the agricultural quiescence that this presupposed, the era of unproductive expenses was at hand.

After Doumer left, the metropolitan Government stepped in once more, and each increase of direct interference meant a larger *personnel*. Expenses thus went up at the very moment when the country's productivity was declining. This was the period when France had no definite colonial policy, and emphasized only interference. Despite the return to budgetary prosperity after 1907, the drift went on until the attacks

<sup>95</sup> A full account of his work is in *Situation de l'Indo-Chine de 1902 à 1907*, 2 vols., 1908; or Gaisman (1906), *op. cit.*, p. 108.

of Messimy and especially of Viollette in the French Parliament.<sup>96</sup> In 1911, the latter showed the contrast between the richness of Indo-China and the detrimental *tracasserie* of the administration. The young attorney was astonished by what he found and, though unduly emphasizing the weaknesses of the situation, forced the apathetic Parliament to do something. His staccato explosions could not be lightly passed over. Each native paid a quarter of his revenue in taxes! Cochin-China's Lieutenant-Governor cost 720,000 francs, while the Minister of Colonies in Paris absorbed only 830,000 in all! Indo-China had a debt of 474,000,000 francs! Annam voted 85 per cent. of its budget for officials, ten per cent. for public works, and yet was supposed to be only indirectly administered! And all of the States were "in the grip of that frightful vampire that officialdom is out there!" This attack, probably because French colonial policy had never before been turned upside-down by the vehemence of a young man, led to the loan of 80 million francs in 1912, and to the appointment of Sarraut to reorganize the administration from top to bottom.<sup>97</sup> The drift from 1902 to 1912 was thus ended, and economic progress was once more possible.

### PRODUCTS

Indo-China is obviously not a geographical unity. It divides into three dissimilar regions, each demanding a different policy. All of the south, the region centring on Saigon, is entirely agricultural and practically limited to rice-production, and to 1901 was the only developed region. All of the north, the area round Haiphong, is far more varied, but with a future resting on industry and mining rather than agriculture. Between these two extremities is the Annamite region proper, radiating from the port of Tourane. This is also almost entirely an agricultural zone, but varies from Cochin-China in not depending primarily on rice. Both of these regions are still mainly agricultural, and so too was the third, until the development of Tonkinese industries in recent years. Indo-China is thus a country of rural industries,—one might almost say, of rice. Rice and its derivatives formed 72 per cent. of the exports in 1900, 62 per cent. in 1924; and nine-tenths of the cultivated area is still devoted to this plant. The economic life of the country rests on rice, with all of the uncertainty that a monoculture land must be subjected to by its dependence on one staple, as was evident in the bad years after 1902. If the abnormal development of one crop simplifies economic problems in ordinary years, it complicates them to a corresponding degree in times of crisis.

<sup>96</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps. 4-7/4/11; Senate, 1/7/11-2/7/11, for debate.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, Deps., 4-6/7/12.

Nevertheless, there is something attractively simple about Indo-China's dependence on rice. All of the natives live on it. All of the peasant-proprietors, save in Central Annam, grow it. All reckon in terms of it. It is the be-all and end-all of existence, and there would even seem to be a certain quaint connection between rice and the monotonously docile temperament of the native! In Cochin-China in particular, there is nothing else in native life and thought except rice. Fifteen of its twenty-two provinces know no other culture; Saigon is the great rice-emporium of the Far East; and Indo-China itself the second rice-producing country of the world. It is symbolical of the changes coming over the land to note, however, that the north is breaking away from this absolute rule of the rice-king, and that, already by 1921, only 180,000 tons out of a total production of 1,720,000 originated in Northern Annam and Tonkin.<sup>98</sup>

Cultivation is still practically limited to the deltas of Cochin-China and Tonkin, with a little by primitive means round the Cambodian lake and the coastal districts of Annam. This is due partly to the wonderful richness of the delta-lands, partly to a regional egotism which keeps the Annamite from the highlands of the interior unless he is actually forced there. How important these deltas are is readily evident. It might appear on the surface that the French stress on the deltas was due to their inability to penetrate to the mountains, but this was not so. The truth is that, from an agricultural point of view, the peninsula narrows itself down to the two deltas. That of the Red River in Tonkin, for instance, includes a fifth of the area and four-fifths of the population. The land really resolves itself into two deltas separated by a huge mountain ballast. The alluvial matter brought down by the rivers carries the mountain to the sea, the interior in this way being the raw material of the deltas. Hongyen, for example, a port much frequented by the Dutch in the seventeenth century, is now 35 miles inland!<sup>99</sup>

These facts seem obvious, but it was not until about 1910 that they were satisfactorily realized by the French. Up till then, there had not been sufficient progress. With such a rich country and a culture like rice, it is not the aggregate production that counts, so much as the relation this amount bears to what might reasonably have been expected from the country. Up to 1910, to the contrary, the French reckoned in terms of what they were getting, not what they should have been getting, and were thus not facing the real problem.

This was chiefly due to certain erroneous emphases on their part.

<sup>98</sup> *L'Indo-Chine*,—special number of *La Vie Technique et Industrielle* (Paris), 1922, p. 46.

<sup>99</sup> British Parliamentary Paper, Cd. 324, 1901, pp. 12-13.

As usual, they had tried to set up a European farming-population, although this was clearly opposed to their general colonial theory. When it comes to *peuplement*, here as elsewhere, the French forgot their theory and sought the unattainable. They neglected the fact that Indo-China was destined by nature for native colorization, not European, and tried to reverse the normal order of things. Free grants were thus readily given to Europeans, and, to 1902, included 192,000 hectares in Tonkin alone.<sup>100</sup>

But the results were uniformly disappointing. Most of the new-comers thought that they could rival the tea-planters of Java or Ceylon, and, ignoring the relatively small yield from rice, turned to the so-called "rich" cultures. When disappointed in this direction, they either abandoned their holdings or simply installed natives on them on a share-basis, thus changing the position not at all for the better, and taking a part of the natives' livelihood. European colonization in the peninsula came to mean failure for the settlers and a burden for the natives. By 1905, therefore, the colonists were uniformly discouraged. Indeed, the Lieutenant-Governor of Cochin-China told his Colonial Council in that year that, even in his rich province, he did not know of one free-grant that had been successful! By this time, too, the element of dispossession involved in the scheme had become obvious. The population of Indo-China is concentrated on the Deltas, where the density is as great as that of Brabant; yet it was only here that the new-comers would settle.<sup>101</sup>

As this fact gradually became evident, French settlement was confined to the richer settlers, who were investors of capital rather than direct farmers. The result was some improvement. Up to 1905, only 27,000 hectares of land were cultivated by Europeans: by 1914, 169,150 hectares of a total granted area of 490,000 were improved, mostly in Cochin-China, with rice in the west and rubber in the east. After the original *métayer* experiments, therefore, it was in the direction of introducing rubber to Cochin-China and coffee to Tonkin that the French settlers were of service.<sup>102</sup>

But this was only a by-product of French settlement, and the basic fact remains that Indo-China is a native-land and rice is a native-culture. The native alone can live directly from the soil, he alone can carry on the garden-culture of the rice-fields. If the European provides capital

<sup>100</sup> Brenier, *Essai d'Atlas Statistique de l'Indo-Chine Française* (1914), p. 193 et seq., for details. For early position, see *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, 1900, p. 472.

<sup>101</sup> For causes of failure, see Gaisman in *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, 10/6/05, or his *L'Œuvre Française au Tonkin* (1906), pp. 136-138.

<sup>102</sup> Brenier in supplement to *L'Asie Française*, Dec. 1923, pp. 4-5; Néton (1904), *op. cit.*, p. 101 et seq.

on the *métayer*-basis, that would be better done by agricultural banks in Government hands : if he directly produces rice with native labour, he is performing no service and is merely retarding the development of peasant-proprietorship. It is only in introducing the newer cultures that there is any scope for him, and the predominance of rice prevents Indo-China rivalling Java or Ceylon in this regard. It is not European settlement, but native, that counts in such a land : so that the emphasis has come to be on the improvement of native culture in the delta-regions already occupied, and, since 1910, on the extension of settlement to the hill-country of the interior.

Peasant-proprietorship is thus the order of the new era. France had to build on the basis of what was already there, in this land of small native settlers, instead of trying to change the entire structure. The natives would not work for Europeans, and, even if they did so, the most stringent punishments the Government could devise did not prevent breaches of contract. Gentleness and force alike made no appeal to them, and they refused to leave their communes or even to work continuously in their home-regions. A perfect insouciance was their most marked characteristic. They had always grown rice and lived on rice : so why should they labour for foreigners or dabble with new crops ? They *might* be desirable, but the native felt himself well off as he was : and, besides, who was he to desert the ways of his revered ancestors, and, by change, imply that *their* methods had been inadequate ? This heedlessness and conservatism for long remained the greatest obstacles of the French in the land, and it was not until the increased prosperity after 1912 that the change came of its own volition.<sup>103</sup>

Once the French had determined to institute peasant-proprietorship as the basis of the economic life of the peninsula, the temperamental difficulty was reinforced by the land question,—always an acute problem in densely populated native lands. How could holdings be defined and divided in such a country of confused traditions ? Yet how could the Government know where it stood without such a definition ? The problem was attacked haphazardly, the result being that certain rules emerged for the French, others for the Annamites, yet none for the land as a whole. The Torrens system, which had been adopted in Tunisia, was viewed charily in such a land, because the native, an inveterate gambler and heedless of the morrow, might too easily lose his lands altogether. Immatriculation on the Torrens model was therefore limited to two provinces, and the difficulties encountered there prevented its

<sup>103</sup> Néton (1904), *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73 ; J. Devallé, *La main d'œuvre en Indo-Chine* (1905).

extension elsewhere.<sup>104</sup> Experience here, as well as in Tunisia and West Africa, clearly showed that making land easily transferable might lead to all manner of social evils and dispossession. As a result of this lesson, the French adhered to the older compromise in Indo-China. That is, they retained native customs for the natives and introduced the *Code Civile* to regulate land matters for the Europeans: but this dualism led to confusion. If it prevented the disruption that might have accompanied the Torrens Act (though surely the increasing sophistication of the natives after 1910 would have largely prevented that), it certainly involved an economic evil. The confusion of land-titles prevented the offering of ready securities for loans and mortgages, and thus did much to keep native methods backward. Boudillon, who has investigated this problem in detail, holds that the present confusion can be brought to an end without placing the native at the mercy of speculators, and that local usages and French law can be combined to produce a system that is at once uniform and suited to the needs of the country. This can be obtained by means of a public register which simply clarifies the native tenure without bringing about the changes the Torrens system would involve. Native ideas are retained, yet made orderly; and thus the French system can be brought into play where Frenchmen are concerned, without confusion and without upsetting the natives. This compromise, somewhat reminiscent of the Algerian system, has been adopted as the basis of reform by de Lanessan's "Commission of Indo-Chinese Legislation," and, though limited to Cochin-China, where the need is greatest and the obstacles fewer, is clearly the system of the future and a distinct aid to peasant-proprietorship.<sup>105</sup>

The next step necessary for any such scheme is an adequate system of rural credit. In this field, practically nothing has been done, although it has for long been recognized that the land depends on small native cultivators. A law of 1894 provided for local agricultural banks on a co-operative basis, but, by 1922, the eleven syndicates so set up numbered only 3,045 adherents out of an agricultural population of three millions, and were not easily accessible to small or even average proprietors! Governor-General Merlin promised in 1923 to redeem this situation, as it was clear that progress on native lines was automatically stopped unless credit was provided for extension. "It is undeniable," said Merlin, "that provincial banks must be created for the provision of agricultural credit." The Administration therefore resolved to institute a Central Bank which would be the nerve-centre of credit for the whole country and which

<sup>104</sup> *L'Asie Française*, Jan. 1924; Nov. 1920, p. 369.

<sup>105</sup> This matter is examined in Boudillon, *Le Régime de la Propriété Foncière en Indo-Chine* (1915), or his article in Dareste, *Recueil Colonial*, 1914.



would operate through advances to district and provincial banks. But all of this remains theory, and the methods of the native proprietors remain very much as they have been through the centuries.<sup>108</sup>

This explains the tardiness in introducing new crops. Old methods do not hinder the production of rice, but, once the new cultures are attempted, both capital and new methods are indispensable. Much agricultural land is awaiting development all over the country, but there are signs that a change is coming. There has been a significant breach in the defences of that aggressive localism which has hitherto characterized the natives. The coming of a greater degree of individualism at once weakened the old social life of the village and tended to force the enterprising individual out to new lands where he could find a wider scope. The railways started this tendency. Annamite labourers settled where the railways took them, and others made the railways arteries for penetrating the hill-country hitherto closed to them, both by their own regionalism and by the lack of communications. Then, the increasing pressure of population in the deltas forced them out to a larger and larger degree, and, in particular, an exodus started from Annam and Tonkin towards the south, where Cochin-China had an inadequate labour-supply.

This movement coincided with a vigorous attempt to introduce new crops. Up to 1910, save for maize and a little coffee and wild rubber, rice absorbed all attention, but after that, the future of rubber and coffee began to attract notice. Plantation-rubber in Cochin-China absorbed twenty million francs of capital by 1920, and other crops followed,—sugar-cane all over the south, cotton in Cambodia, coffee in Tonkin. Agriculture was becoming capitalized, over and above the basic rice-culture. The result is that to-day Cochin-China is becoming a land of varied cultures, and each of the other provinces is becoming associated with a distinct agricultural staple other than rice. Methods, too, are keeping pace with this expansion, and motor-culture is more and more replacing the water-buffalo. Hence too, the emphasis on irrigation since 1910. Canals were necessary to regulate the waters of Cochin-China, conservation-schemes to offset the irregular rains of Cambodia, irrigation-works to cultivate the innumerable little deltas along the Annamite coast, and dams to minimize the vagaries of the Red River and to prevent famine in Tonkin. Indeed, these schemes are said to be as important for the era after 1912 as railways were after 1898. At present, 236,000 acres are irrigated, but these works are limited to the two northern pro-

<sup>108</sup> *L'Asie Française*, Feb. 1924, p. 77.

vinces, and, despite the proposed expenditure of 76½ million piastres, irrigation-works still remain in the world of theory.<sup>107</sup>

Nevertheless, the main agricultural battle has been fought, with the realization that Indo-China must in the main be left in native hands and that progress means an improvement of native methods. This is the main point. The European part is confined to direction and education, with that capitalistic experimentation which is needed for the introduction of new cultures which are costlier and more technical than rice-production. With this limitation of objective, such facilities as an adequate land-régime and credit, irrigation and communications become only incidentals to be realized as opportunities offer. The basic point is that the agricultural policy since 1910 has been brought once more into harmony with the needs of the situation.

### INDUSTRY

Side by side with this, the north of the peninsula has been literally transformed by the growth of industry, the result being that Tonkin is to-day the most industrialized possession the French have. Up to 1902 a development along these lines was not even thought of. Only the Hongay coal-mines were in operation (1885 on), and the distinctive local industries of the natives were despised by the French. The cotton of Tonkin went to China to be spun and came back to be woven; rice was so treated by hand-turned machines that it could not be sold even in the Oriental markets; cane lost much of its sugar-content in being crushed; and naturally any suggestion that the raw materials of Tonkin might be manufactured to compete on the European market was crushed by a France that was convinced that colonies existed only to turn against the mother-country on the slightest pretext. Doumer, though he did more for the land than perhaps any other man, only reflected current opinion in saying that the industrialization of Tonkin was a form of treason and that it would be a dereliction of his duty not to suppress industrial concerns at the outset.

Against this attitude stood the undoubted facilities for industry in the country. The presence of iron and coal in large quantities made metallurgical industries possible, and with these went the textile trades. As has been seen in the case of West Africa and Madagascar, it is the trade in cheap cotton-goods that is the main element in the commerce of a native country: so too it was in Indo-China, but here the colonists endeavoured to solve the problem by manufacturing the cloth themselves. A cotton-mill was established at an early date at Hanoi, and two more added in the industrial revival between 1898 and 1901: but the difficulties

<sup>107</sup> *L'Indo-Chine*, 1922, *op. cit.*, pp. 51, 63 *et seq.*

encountered were typical of those met by industries in French colonies. France was either openly or passively antagonistic: British cottons continued to enter through Hong-Kong, despite the tariff: the dependence on American raw material meant continued uncertainty (in 1904, for example, the American crisis halved the value of cotton and ruined distant markets like Indo-China, that had bought in advance): general manufacturing costs were high: and labour, though plentiful, was undependable. But these difficulties were all surmounted, and gradually Haiphong became the industrial centre of Indo-China, and Tonkin became more and more industrialized. The water-communications, the coal, and the abundant labour-supplies combined to effect this; and cement-works and distilleries, silk-mills and electrical undertakings began on a large scale.

Further south, where the natural advantages were not so marked and labour not so plentiful, there was no kindred development, save for the rice-mills of Cholon, in Cochin-China, which to-day turn out 18,000 tons of husked rice a week. Industrialization in Indo-China is really limited to Tonkin, save for the secondary industries connected with rice in the south. Perhaps this rapid modernization of Tonkin after 1903 did much to explain the growth of the port of Haiphong and the moving of the federal capital north to Hanoi, implying as this did that the nerve-centre of Indo-Chinese affairs had left the agricultural south, and gone to the industrial north, because, after all, agriculture was stationary, while industry had unlimited possibilities in a land so richly endowed with minerals and labour. Whatever the cause, there is now no doubt that Indo-Chinese affairs centre on Hanoi.

#### COMMUNICATIONS

Such a transformation in a French colony naturally involved many difficult questions. The most obvious of these was communications. Indo-China was a scattered land of nearly six million hectares, with difficult mountain-barriers separating the centres of population. Therefore, when the question arose of colonizing the hill-lands, or of bringing labour and raw materials together, or of transporting manufactured goods to the port, it was the difficulty of effective communications that threatened to be the limiting factor. The development of the land from every point of view necessitated cheap and rapid transport. The isolation of the deltas had to be overcome; hence the emphasis on railways, even at that early epoch in French colonization when railways were viewed by Paris as needless luxuries. The groundnut railway in the Senegal had shown, however, that a railway could create new provinces

out of desert country, and this was the standpoint from which the French administrators approached the question in Indo-China.

The first railways were either short local lines in Cochin-China (1880) or military lines in Tonkin (1890), but effort in general was spasmodic until the loan of 80 million francs which was obtained by the law of December, 1896.<sup>108</sup> This loan, indeed, had a significance for Indo-China far wider than economic. It was subscribed twenty-eight times over, and was the first indication of the credit of Tonkin on the home market. As a result of the optimism thus engendered, the Lang-Son railway to the Chinese frontier was pushed ahead and completed by 1902.

At that moment, and largely as a result of the birth of the country's credit, came Doumer's programme of 1898. This was a vast project to connect Tonkin and Cochin-China by a trunk line, with numerous arteries for the intensive development of the two boundary States. A loan of 200 million francs was secured by the law of December, 1898, and the execution of the scheme commenced.<sup>109</sup> The Hanoi line was run down the coast to Vinh in Annam by 1905, and, at the same time, a start was made to work north from Tourane and effect a junction. But the actual work of construction was slow, because, after it had reached Hué (and thus linked Annam's capital with a port), it was a hopeless economic proposition and was only of strategic importance as forming part of the main trunk-line. Hindered by typhoons and floods, and at an exorbitant cost, it came only to Kwang-tri by 1908, and lingered there. It was clearly uncalled for, and due to the French passion for constructing symmetrical schemes on a map. It was not the relatively poor Annam but the rice-lands of Cochin-China and especially the industrial regions of Tonkin that needed the railways. The same objections applied to the railway eastward from Saigon in Cochin-China. The original project was too ambitious, and the railway never reached the terminus of Lang-Biang, but stopped in 1913 at Khan-hoa—nor was there the slightest reason why it should go on, save that Doumer had linked the two places on his vacant map in 1898!

It was the northern line that was far and away the most important,—that from Haiphong up the Red River to Lao-kai on the frontier and beyond to the capital of Yunnan. This was to realize the old dream of Garnier and Dupuis and Ferry, and was to link Tonkin and South China by a dependable communication. Here, as in Annam, economic and political reasons blended. The railway was certain of heavy traffic in the Delta, but beyond that it was comparatively useless in the mountain-regions, and, if the expected Chinese trade from beyond Lao-kai did not

<sup>108</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., sess. ext., 1895, docts. parl., p. 1608 (Krantz).

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, Deps., docts. parl., sess. ext., 1898, p. 341 *et seq.*

develop, would be another white elephant, as was the coastal-line in Annam. Through the Delta by 1903, it was then held up by its costliness in the unhealthy desert region, and it was not opened till 1906, and did not reach Yunnan's capital till four years later. Even then, it was rendered uncertain by continual landslides in the rainy season, and cost 165 million francs as against the original estimate of 94 millions! <sup>110</sup>

By 1911, the vital sections of Doumer's programme were thus completed, although it required a new loan of 80 million francs in 1912 to round off the work.<sup>111</sup> Part of this was to go to the coast-line which still remained an obsession with the administration. A line connecting Hanoi and Saigon is a dream of the French, although for what reason, except for running a pretty red ribbon across the map, is not clear. This is one of those cases where the French cannot help following a general plan, despite the fact that it is the extremities, and not the centre, of Indo-China that are important. But they see only the fragment in the north, the fragment in the south, and the fragment in the centre, and yearn to connect them. Governor-General Long, for instance, said that this is a main line to tap the colony and to give an economic unity to the federation; but it is clear that Annam does not offer very much for the tapping and that the federation has no economic unity! And the other arguments that it would bring the needed labour to Cochin-China and rice to Annam are surely based on a myopia that refuses to see other means of achieving those ends! Nevertheless, Long raised a local loan of 6,180,000 piastres to complete the Vinh-Dong Ha section and thus at least connect Hanoi and Hué,—a project which continues to attract attention in Indo-China.

As a result of this emphasis on railways since 1898, the peninsula now has 1,288 miles of line; and, what is unusual in a French colony, they followed a preconceived scheme from the first. In view of this achievement, it would appear that railway development is somewhat over-emphasized at present, and that a corresponding expenditure on the waterways of the land would produce a more than commensurate return. Despite this, however, Indo-China is perhaps the most favourably situated of all the French colonies as regards communications, although it might be suggested that future needs should be determined rather by a study of the distribution of the population and its concentration in the delta regions than by a perusal of the sprawling map of Indo-China.

#### THE CURRENCY PROBLEM

Indo-China's next difficulty was perhaps even more pressing,—the intricate currency question, which also was more urgent here than in

<sup>110</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., docts. parl., sess. ext., 1898, p. 25 *et seq.*—a good survey.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-6/7/12.

any other French colony. It has been seen that labour, except in Cochin-China, did not present a vital problem, that communications were adequate, that all the necessary raw materials were to be found in the land, and that, since 1903 at least, there was no shortage of capital. Where the difficulty came from was in Indo-China's dependence on an essentially Oriental market,—in other words, her well-being came to be determined more by the vagaries of the silver currencies of the Orient than by any other single factor. This problem did not arise in so acute a form in the other French colonies, and certainly in none of them was it the determining factor of the country's prosperity.

The whole question is very confused, but the gist of the matter is that the silver piastre (normally about 2s.) is the currency-unit and that notes of the Bank of Indo-China are legal tender. But, owing to the fact that silver may not be exported or imported, the country suffers when it has a credit-balance, because then, unless it can keep its exchange normal by opening foreign-credits, the rate of exchange of its paper-money tends to rise. That at once places an exporting country at a disadvantage, and, since Indo-China has generally had a credit-balance since the early years of the century, and since her exports are mainly to countries with depreciated silver-currencies, the rate of exchange is usually at a premium,—indeed, so much so at times that a crisis comes. That is, any undue degree of prosperity, owing to the peculiar currency-system, walks hand-in-hand with a crisis. There is a continual exchange-crisis in the land.<sup>113</sup>

To this is joined a monetary crisis due to the silver position. Everything went well as long as silver remained constant, but, when Germany de-monetized its silver thalers in 1873, the Mexican piastres which were the coinage of the Far East began to depreciate. By November, 1902, therefore, their worth had fallen from 5.43 francs to 1.925, and this inevitably meant a rise in prices and a blow to the import-trade from France. On the other hand, the colony enjoyed all of the temporary advantages of depreciation in fostering its export-trade towards the gold-countries of Europe, although, since her main trade was with the Chinese market, this offset was more theoretical than real. Stabilization was out of the question so long as the Mexican piastre was in use, so these were de-monetized from the beginning of 1906, and French piastres alone used. But to keep out the changing Mexican piastre from surrounding countries meant that Indo-China became an artificially isolated economic unit, with the constant exchange-crises referred to above.

<sup>113</sup> A good account of this question is in *L'Indo-Chine*, 1922, *op. cit.*, p. 5 et seq. The successive stages of the controversy may be followed in *L'Asie Française*, Jan. 1920–Feb. 1922, or J. H. Adam, *L'Argent-métail et la Question Monétaire indo-chinoise* (1922).

Indo-China, in a word, became too prosperous, and was exactly situated towards its Chinese market as the United States were towards the world-market after 1918. The worst crisis was in 1919-1920, when the fever of buying caused by the world rise of prices combined with a poor rice-harvest to swell Indo-China's credit, without any opposite commercial balance. The position became absurd. The value of the piastre rose from 2.40 francs in 1914 to 6.50 in 1920,—that is, the value of silver had appreciated more than 100 per cent. in relation to gold, and, even so, paper was at an actual premium of 15 per cent. over this!<sup>113</sup> This meant that Indo-China was indulging in a very debauch of currency-prosperity,—a prosperity which was, of course, immediately weakening. In December, 1919, therefore, the Government not only removed the restriction on the imports of precious metal, but positively enforced such imports to the value of a fifth of the rice-crop. There was not enough silver to correspond to the country's prosperity, hence its value rose. To prevent a panic-rush by the natives, the Government also set up a " Forced Currency " in 1920, fixing the value of the piastre by decree, and relieving the Bank of the necessity of converting notes. By January, 1922, this drastic regulation had removed the premium that paper had over metal, and so limited the variation of the currency's value to the fluctuations in the price of silver.<sup>114</sup>

But the real problem remained, and Berru  's Commission of Monetary Reform in 1920 recommended stabilization on a *gold* basis.<sup>115</sup> Yet this was rendered impossible by reason of the continued fall in the price of silver and the depreciation of the franc: and, moreover, it is by no means certain that this is not unduly arguing from European conditions. The silver standard, whatever its theoretical disabilities, is the medium of exchange in the Orient, and it is in the Oriental market that Indo-China's destinies are determined. Then again, the prosperity of Indo-China to-day is in no small measure due to this silver standard. It *did* secure a stability of prices in the land after the war, and, save for a rise in prices for a few months, had left the natives scarcely affected by the post-war crisis. Wages in piastres in Tonkin were only ten or twenty per cent. higher in 1922 than they had been in 1914, and prices were relatively stable in the home market. That accounts for the absence of a post-war collapse such as every other French colony had to face: it also explains why Indo-China, too prosperous within in comparison with

<sup>113</sup> J. H. Adam (1922), *op. cit.*, p. 240 *et seq.*

<sup>114</sup> *L'Asie Fran  aise*, March 1922, p. 100; *Colonies et Marine*, 1922, pp. 573-576.

<sup>115</sup> The report is in full in *Bulletin Economique de l'Indo-Chine*, Sept.-Oct. 1921, or *L'Economiste Fran  ais*, 19/11/21. A summary is in *L'Asie Fran  aise*, Sept.-Oct. 1920, p. 320.

her neighbours, had to suffer, in so far as her export-trade was concerned. It is not to any colony's interest to have an exceptional monetary standard. It cannot be exceptionally good both inside and outside of Indo-China: hence, there is again a pronounced move towards a gold-basis. "We cannot get away from the fact that in a world of gold-standards, payments in silver take on something of the nature of barter, and are not very practical, as the limitations of the silver-standard render stable exchange very difficult in this metal."<sup>116</sup> Indo-China has still not reached a settlement of this difficult issue, which, by reason of its very paradoxes, enabled her safely to pass the various crises since 1914. Had it not been for the local nature of her market, however, the tale would have been very different: and the country has learnt that even prosperity is relative to the world in which it lives.

### TRADE

All of these influences were alike reflected from time to time in the trade of the country.<sup>117</sup> The tariff of 1892, the rice-question, the industrialization of Tonkin, the changing demands of the natives, the growth of communications, and especially the currency issue, all blended to affect trade. How important the last-mentioned is in particular may be seen from the fact that trade has to be reckoned in "arbitrated" francs,—that is, as converted by a permanent customs commission to coincide with the real position of the piastre. But, over and above this, when both the franc and the piastre commenced to vary, and not in unison, a comparative study, even within Indo-China itself, became out of the question. For instance, the values of 1919 showed a difference over those of 1911 of 253 per cent. for the imports and 252 per cent. for the exports, whereas it was clear that, in reality, commerce had not increased to this abnormal extent. Yet to calculate in gold-values would only make the position still more confused, because this ignores both the changing value of gold in Europe and the unreality of such a conversion in Indo-China. All that can be said is that it is impossible to compare trade at different dates since 1911, for even the tonnage does not give a real view of the situation, because much, especially with such variations both in Europe and Indo-China, depended on the return as well as the actual output.

Even a computation in gold-values, however, shows a rise of 67.6 per cent. in the general trade of the country between 1911 and 1920, so that there was a real increase over and above that due to the monetary

<sup>116</sup> *L'Indo-Chine*, 1922, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>117</sup> The sources for this section are the annual trade-reports of Indo-China and the reports on the "special commerce" of France every year.



position. The solidity of growth can also be implied (though not actually reckoned) from the following table :—

	IMPORTS.	EXPORTS.
	(Millions of Francs.)	
1900 . . .	185·8	155·5
1902 . . .	215	185 —Doumer left after good years
1903 . . .	204·1	120·4—crop failures, drought.
1907 . . .	294·9	253·3—exceptional rice-harvest.
1912 . . .	273·0	260·7
1919 . . .	532·0	846·2
1920 . . .	848·1	982·0
1921 . . .	807·7	1284·0
1922 . . .	839·3	1112·0
1923 . . .	1093·5	1154·8
1924 . . .	1388·5	1771·5

The only permissible deductions from this table are that trade has undoubtedly increased, and that the favourable balance of exports over imports has been more and more accentuated since 1912. To that date, indeed, imports outweighed exports, but exports so increased from then onwards that, as has been seen, they became almost a menace in giving the country unduly large credit-balances.

The other striking feature of the country's trade-position is how unsuccessful France has been in the competition. Such a rich colony was naturally assimilated to the mother-land in 1887, for, however much the productivity of the colony was affected, France simply had to reserve this rich import-trade for herself.<sup>118</sup> As Prince Henry of Orléans wrote :

" We had not been masters of Tonkin for two years before we surrounded it with a thick wall of customs-duties, and, in order to gratify a few French traders, we arrested the commercial development of the country, not reflecting that a budding colony needs a maximum of liberty and free action, and that the greater the trade, the greater the profits."

Not content with this, France even placed export-duties on certain goods going from Indo-China to foreign countries, and Doumer went still further in making customs-receipts one of his fundamental sources of revenue. Despite this ultra-protection, however, the French share in the colony's trade was only 22·5 per cent. in 1900, 20 per cent. in 1913, and 18·1 per cent. in 1922 as regarded exports, and, for imports, 40 per cent. in 1900, 46 per cent. in 1913, and 42·4 per cent. in 1922. France had not increased her share in Indo-China's exports in the slightest, and, during the war, had even lost her imports to Hong-Kong.

At present, therefore, it is realized that French control must be

<sup>118</sup> See debate in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 12, 19/2/87; or *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National*, 1889-1890, Vol. II, p. 345.

limited to the import side ; and, even there, the local industrialists are vigorously protesting that the *régime* of 1892 is " illogical and inequitable," especially for a colony that has developed as much as Indo-China has. Indo-China is a nation, it is argued, and hence should decide her own tariff-system : moreover, it is largely an industrial nation, and an industrial nation, to survive, must manipulate its tariffs with this end alone in view, and not the consideration of rival manufacturers on the other side of the world : and lastly, they argue, even if their patriotism makes them accept the existing system, equity demands that they should obtain a reciprocity. French goods enter the colony free, yet some colonial goods are taxed on entering France. The Indo-Chinese argue that their geographical position and the threatened economic invasion of neighbouring Powers, especially Japan, necessitate a special *régime* : but so little do their arguments avail that decrees of March and June, 1921, made the Indo-Chinese tariff prohibitive to foreigners.<sup>119</sup> The old ideas of 1892, disguised as they were in Sarraut's scheme, were once more in the ascendant, and this handicap was placed on the colony, even in the difficult post-war years, in order to exclude the English. It is true that the French share in imports recovered from 29.6 per cent. in 1920 to 42.4 per cent. two years later, but this was only at the cost of draining away from the colony capital needed for its industries and railways. It is significant, however, as showing the reactionary nature of French colonial policy since the war, and as denying, not only tariff-autonomy, but even an adequate tariff-reciprocity. The colony has to be subordinated to France : that is all. The position, therefore, is that Indo-China continues to send its goods to other than the French markets, but is forced to buy half its imports from France, and thus to submit to a perfectly uncompensated Imperial taxation.<sup>120</sup>

Despite this burden, the general prosperity of the colony remains undoubted. Just as before, Indo-China met tariff-assimilation by paying the added tax and going on as usual, so now it continues in the same way. It is far and away the most flourishing French colony. It is the second colony from the point of view of trade : it has cost France little since the early days in Tonkin : it has a consistently favourable trade-balance : its trade is increasing, both from the agricultural and industrial stand-points : it has had no post-war crisis in the sense that the other colonies had : it has 200 million francs in its reserve banks : its currency was at times more valuable than the French franc : it is, alone of the French

<sup>119</sup> *L'Asie Française*, Jan. 1922, p. 25.

<sup>120</sup> Protest of Saigon Chamber of Commerce in *L'Asie Française*, Feb. 1924, p. 69 ; *Congrès du Régime Douanier Colonial. Compte Rendu et Rapports* (1925), p. 133, or the Sambuc Report on pp. 470, 485 *et seq.*

colonies, raising internal loans for purposes of development: it gave almost 200 million francs for war-loans: it had an average budget-balance of thirteen million piastres in the crucial years of 1920-1922: it gets twelve million piastres a year from customs and 44½ million from the State monopolies (1922), and it is developing in every direction. It has the land, the labour, and the capital for an indefinite expansion, and, since 1911, no legacies of past failures to militate against future advance.

### VII. Conclusion

On the whole, then, Indo-China is the most conspicuous triumph of French colonization, just as it was the most obvious failure in the years before 1897. Up to 1910, with the exception of Doumer's period, it could almost be said that Indo-China saw the emergence of a rich country, despite everything that the French could do to hinder it. Even their colonial theories and their officials and the vagaries of Paris could not prevent such a triumph, and it is idle to argue how much greater the progress would have been had not Tonkin been a synonym for colonial despair until 1897, and had not the Paris *bureaux* consistently reversed such developmental policies as those of Paul Bert and de Lanessan, and even much of Doumer's.

As it is, however, Indo-China from the time of Sarraut (1912) stands for success in practically every direction, and at a time when the French colonies, without exception, were traversing acute crises. It is an example of successful organization, despite the variations between Cochin-China and the rest of the peninsula, and the different conditions in each of the component States. Its system of a powerful Government-General, with local variations for each State, has worked well, and without the rigid demarcation and quarrels that have typified, say, the federal organizations in Australia and Canada.

Economically, the colony also stands out. It is unrivalled anywhere in the French Empire in this connection, although it must be admitted that the railway-policy and the industrialization of Tonkin emerged directly in the face of metropolitan opposition, and the colony's development is still hindered by tariff levies imposed for France's benefit. Despite these limitations, however, Indo-China shows what can be effected by an ambitious but co-ordinated programme of public works,—if there is a rich colony and a large labour-supply to secure an immediate return on the expenditure involved.

As far as the natives are concerned, the record has also been good, although here again it is a moot point how far this is due to the curious urbanity of the Annamite temperament and how far to the applicability of French policy in itself. Certainly, France made as many mistakes

as possible in the early years, both in disregarding native traditions and in breaking up the age-old social structures and in thwarting the ambitions of the mandarins. But the toleration after 1911, and in particular the transformation of native existence by the economic improvement of the individual Annamite, more than "counteracted this. Economic advancement in some way or other transmutes racial issues and makes the points of friction, in such a country as Indo-China, far less emphasized : that is why a summary of the turmoils of 1905-1910, for instance, seems so anomalous to-day. Yet it must not be inferred from this that there is no native problem in Indo-China. Where there are twenty million natives, bound together by a consistent and aggressive civilization, there is certain to be a problem : and the dangerous point is that, once economic advancement passes a certain stage, and once the natives have overcome their initial thankfulness for the change and take it as something for granted, they turn with renewed dogmatism and self-assertion to the pursuance of their national claims. So that Indo-China, if it does not present a native problem as acute as that of Algeria or Tunisia, has at least a nascent one, and it is complicated by the difficulty of evaluating the importance of Pan-Asiatic movements and of gauging how real is the slumbrous and passive hostility of the people. On the other hand, it may be said that France has secured greater native quietness in Indo-China since 1911 than in most of her African colonies ; and the present policy of association, with its agreement to recognize each other's differences and to evolve on parallel lines, does much to continue this harmony.

In general, then, France has retrieved a dangerous position in Indo-China,—and the curious feature is that most of this success was won by radical politicians, who were often virtually exiled here to get rid of them. De Lanessan, Doumer, Sarraut, Maurice Long all fall within this category, yet it is precisely these men who have made Indo-China for France. As a result, the peninsula has become an " Oriental France," not only self-sufficient in itself, not only prosperous after the long world-crisis, but actually a centre for disseminating more French influences. Its founders thought that perhaps it might have a good effect on French activities in South China : instead of doing only this, it has become a proselytizing centre for French activities throughout the Eastern hemisphere. It is the centre of that policy of *entraide* which Sarraut has invoked to revive the French belt of dominion across the South Pacific : and it is on Indo-China's prosperity that the programme of linking New Caledonia to Panama directly depends. The peninsula has thus become a second homeland for French Imperialism, and nothing in French colonization is as significant as the contrast between this position and the drift and pessimism of the period before Sarraut went out in 1912.

Indo-China has forced a way into the forefront of the French colonies, and is the only French colony that in any way resembles the prosperous position of England's dominions of Canada and Australia, although it must be remembered that there is no French *peuplement* there. Once dominion-status or responsible government is mentioned, it has to be remembered that there are only 16,600 Frenchmen to nineteen million natives. Apart from this emigration aspect, however, there is much in common between Indo-China and a British Dominion; and certainly it is only to this French colony, and to Algeria, that arguments drawn from the British Dominions can in any sense apply. Yet, after all, despite the emphasis on the colony's prosperity, the final word must be a query. Is it correct to say that France has succeeded in Indo-China, or simply that Indo-China has succeeded? And therein, especially in the years before 1911, lay the whole question.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE ANCIENNES COLONIES

THESE colonies, which are so familiar to the student of French colonization, in no sense belie their name. As soon as one enters their affairs, the curtains of time seem swept aside. Theirs is a world that has gone, their significance is mainly historical. They are like a living memory,—a somewhat painful anachronism. In the past, after the great dismemberment of France's overseas lands, they meant the French Empire: they *were* the Empire.<sup>1</sup> As such, they determined policy up to, and even for long after, the accession of Algeria, because it was not until 1870 that Algeria ceased to be a conquest and became a colony, in so far as French policy was concerned. It was in them that the council-schemes were worked out, in them that experiments were made in the direction of tariff-autonomy, in them that universal franchise was tried, in them that the system of judicial and administrative assimilation received its strongest expression,—in them, in short, that France tried her various liberal and repressive policies in turn. That is their significance in the history of French colonization,—that they were an experimental-ground and that these experiments of a day that has gone still linger on. Hence, even as their practical importance dwindled, their interest remained,—and will remain, as long as the negroes there retain their privileges, for these islands are the scene of an experiment in the creation of a people, or rather, the attempted creation of a modern State out of untrained negro materials.

As their name implies, the history of the various island-groups goes back to the earliest days of the old French Empire,—the Empire of Richelieu and Colbert, of the *Grand-Maître* and the *Intendants*. Theirs is an epitome of the history of Anglo-French rivalries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for they changed ownership with practically every outbreak of hostilities and as regularly reverted to their former condition with the conclusion of peace. France first went to St. Christo-

<sup>1</sup> With them was always coupled Réunion, which had an exactly similar development, and by a curious coincidence, the same economic conditions and population problems. With the Antilles, it constituted the sugar-lands of the Empire. See H. Fouque, etc., *L'Isle de la Réunion* (1923), p. 138 *et seq.*

pher in 1625,—the settlement of Martinique and Guadeloupe, the islands which became the mainstay of her Antilles possessions, dating from a decade later. The islands were all handed over to Companies during most of the first century of their existence, and, despite the constant colonial wars, prospered during most of the time until the close of the eighteenth century. The toll of diplomacy, however, gradually reduced the far wider French estate in the Antilles until only Martinique and Guadeloupe were left to her after the Napoleonic Wars. France thus had two very rich islands in the West Indies, both eminently suitable for sugar-cultivation, but, since the middle of the seventeenth century, entirely dependent on slave-labour.<sup>2</sup>

Since the Napoleonic Wars, their history has been mainly catastrophic, the chain of disasters starting with the abolition of slavery and the competition of beet-sugar in Europe. The slaves had already been freed by the Constituent Assembly in 1794 and then enslaved again under Napoleon, but more than half of them were gradually emancipated during the early years of the nineteenth century. None the less, the brusque and inconsiderate introduction of a general emancipation in 1848 precipitated a crisis. A legislative act suddenly interfered with the operation of economic forces and turned a gradual movement which was beneficial to all concerned into a disaster. Considerations of the time-factor, of economic facts, of training the freed men, and of keeping a balance in island society were none of them taken into account. All that mattered was the doctrine of the Parisian demagogues who had set up the Republic. They freed the slaves, enfranchised the negroes of Africa and the coolies of the Indian towns, and thought to regulate grave problems of colonial practice by reference to a theory! With the history of 1794 before them, it seems scarcely credible that such events should have repeated themselves. But the evil was easily accomplished. The Schoelcher decree of April 17, 1848, was one of the first acts of the provisional Government, and its content was even incorporated in the constitution (Section 6) of the same year. In 1849 the National Assembly, since they could not overlook the fact that what they called liberalism meant expropriation for the colonies, gave 126 million francs in compensation, mostly in *rentes*; but, as the bulk of the money was not paid directly and as the average amount vouchsafed (500 francs) was admittedly far below the value of a slave, this did little to allay the crisis.<sup>3</sup>

It was a crisis affecting every class, and, it must be admitted, for the

<sup>2</sup> P. Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Petites Antilles : Etude sur leur Evolution Economique* (1907), p. 143 *et seq.*—a basic source.

<sup>3</sup> Girault, 1923, 2.2.209.

worse. The 160,000 slaves, bred for generations in an atmosphere of slavery and saturated with a psychology of subordination and dependence on others, were suddenly given their freedom: and it was not unnatural that the majority, remembering the terrors of the *Code Noir* which had been in force since 1685, should construe that freedom as liberty to harass their former masters. No step involving a social or economic reform of this magnitude could hope to be successful without a long preparation: yet none was given. The ex-slaves did not realize the nature of responsibility, and had a practically undeveloped moral sense. So that it could be truthfully said that "the Republic of 1848, in bringing about this work of high morality and social justice, also committed the humanitarian blunder of making citizens of men who were still children."<sup>4</sup> As a class, therefore, the negroes refused to co-operate in helping the State, and would not work. The emancipation of 1848 thus involved a crisis that was at the one time social and economic and political.

But the planters had to have labour. An industry of the magnitude of the cane-sugar of the West Indies could not be destroyed at a blow. Production, under the first confusion, fell from 33 million kilos. in 1848 to twelve million in 1851, and this decline threatened to be permanent unless immigrants—and immigrants already acclimatized to manual labour in the Tropics—came in in large numbers. France therefore scoured the over-populated regions of the globe to obtain labour for the Antilles and the similarly situated Réunion. Heedless of the social and political problems she was thus laying up for the future, or rather, perhaps neglecting them because she could not afford to contemplate them, she made the islands a dumping-ground for unassimilable Africans and Asiatics. At first there was a turn to a so-called free immigration from the continent of Africa, and 50,000 blacks came to the *Anciennes Colonies* (12,800 of them to the Antilles) in the seven years after 1852. But the method of recruiting and conditions on arrival showed clearly that this was only the old slavery under a new name, and the system ended in January, 1865. Such a scanty change of names was too obvious, and the position became untenable when French labour vessels were stopped by gunboats of other Powers as slavers. Unabashed by this failure, France turned to China and then to India. Conventions with the English in 1860–1861 allowed labour-recruiting in those parts of India under British influence, and, until the system was forbidden by them in 1888, 200,000 Indians emigrated to France's lands in the Tropics. Of these 64,700 had gone to the Antilles, and were directly responsible for the striking prosperity of those islands in the twenty years after 1860.<sup>5</sup> By about 1884,

<sup>4</sup> Chemin-Dupontès (1907), *op. cit.*, p. 192.

<sup>5</sup> Chemin-Dupontès (1907), *op. cit.*, p. 203 *et seq.*



however, the needs of the position had again changed. Asiatic immigrants pouring in in such large numbers meant all manner of problems for the State: the changing conditions, too, had forced the natives to work, and, noisily insistent on their rights in the political world they dominated, they refused to have Indian competitors. The truth of the matter was that the two islands had won a new life with the 86,000 immigrant labourers they had received from Africa and India, and, thus strengthened, could face the newer crisis,—the crisis that was more formidable than any of its predecessors, because it meant the threatened extinction of their staple.

The competition of beet-sugar with the cane of the islands literally ruined the French Antilles and Réunion. The facts may be stated quite baldly. In 1850 the world produced only 200,000 tons of beet-sugar to 1,200,000 tons of cane: by 1880 there were two million tons of each; and by 1900 seven million tons of beet to four millions of cane-sugar. In those few facts lies one side of the tragedy of the Antilles. The islands, under the circumstances, had made a wonderful recovery from the emancipation crisis. Martinique had re-attained the position of 1847 in 1860, Guadeloupe twelve years later; and by the early eighties both were enjoying an unprecedented prosperity. In 1882, the *apogée* of their prosperity, they bought 55 million francs' worth of produce and sold over 80 million francs' worth. In the previous fifteen years, matching the good seasons against the bad, the accumulated trade-balance in their favour had been over 100 million francs, and this meant, under the simple economic conditions pertaining in the islands, a corresponding enrichment of industry.\*

Two years later the crisis burst like the central vortex of a cyclone, and, since then, neither of the islands has really recovered from the wreckage. More and more beet-sugar was being produced, and, to make the over-production doubly bad, the world output of cane-sugar kept on increasing. Porto Rico, Cuba, Java, Hawaii, all entered the field, relying on their cheap labour-supplies to enable them to survive and eliminate their less favoured competitors. It was inevitable that prices should fall under these conditions, but, when they suddenly collapsed 31 per cent. in the two years after 1882, the magnitude and rapidity of the fall paralysed the Antilles. They could do nothing except passively submit: they produced only a hundredth of the world's supply and so could not influence markets or prices. They simply had to stop producing and suffer. Thus, sugar-exports fell from 60.9 million francs in 1882 to 22.8 million in 1886, 16 million in 1896, and to round about 20 million in the early years of this century. The history of the islands

\* Analysis in Chemin-Dupontès (1907), *op. cit.*, p. 218.

had by now become a mere catalogue of disasters. Sugar kept on falling, and the price of living going up.<sup>7</sup> When there was no over-production, droughts and floods and cyclones visited the islands. The eruption of Mount Pelé in 1902 lost Martinique a third of its commerce and destroyed the richest parts of the island. And, to this decalogue of horrors, the class-struggles and the political drift formed an appropriate background. Unrestrained social passions meant "race-riots"<sup>8</sup>; and an undeveloped electorate and an irresponsible government involved an almost unbelievable state of political corruption. It seemed as if the persons suffering from the economic crisis were trying to excoriate their wounds and indulge in a debauchery of self-induced suffering.

Since 1895, therefore, the islands have been in a protracted state of crisis, both political and economic. Even the optimists who have formulated grandiose schemes for a *mise en valeur* of the rest of the French Empire, even for the sands of the Sahara, have not thought it worth while troubling over these sugar-islands. Their day is admittedly over, and they now give to France only an unwanted competition for her beet-sugar industry at home, a troublesome crop of problems,—and remarkably cheap rum.

Perhaps the gravest of the problems remains the psychological "dry-rot" which is at the basis of the political and social troubles. The real cause of the evil admittedly goes back to the days of slavery. The slave-system denied opportunity or hope to those it throttled, the result being that, when individuals were thrown away free, they did not know what to do. They had never been made even efficient economic instruments. Indeed, that was the sphere in which slavery most obviously failed. It had proven a very costly and most inefficient means of production: hence the great increase of individual emancipation before 1857. The system taught the negroes nothing, and left them backward and unprogressive labourers, developed in only one direction,—hatred, but over-developed in that regard almost to the point of emotional insanity. The old *Code Noir* had distinguished thirty different kinds of negroes, the differences between them being minutely defined by law and involving a different treatment for each class. However much the Code might contain provisions that seemed fair enough on a cursory perusal, it had come to mean the conscious debasement of the negroes and mulattoes. "Negroes and food for negroes . . . that is all there is to colonial policy," Dubuc, an island-Governor, had written to Raynal. Carried as it was to its logical implication under the French, this viewpoint was that slavery meant the existence of *living* implements of pro-

<sup>7</sup> *Compte Rendu du Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1909, pp. 582, 608 et seq.

<sup>8</sup> *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, 10/6/99, p. 338; 25/9/99, p. 573.

duction whose only other purpose in the world was to afford sensual gratification for their owners. Hence the degradations of the *Code Noir*: hence the large mulatto class: hence the bitter racial antipathies in the islands: hence the several slave-revolts between 1816 and 1830, and the regular civil-war of 1831: and hence the determination of the freed slaves to exact a lasting revenge from the French for the wrongs they and their parents had suffered. The moral values of the ex-slaves, deformed as they were, anti-social as they became after 1870, could at least be understood.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the history of the groups after emancipation was predetermined by the legacies of the past,—a point that is clinched beyond the possibility of doubt by the experience of Réunion. There, away in the Indian Ocean, although the economic conditions of the Antilles were exactly reproduced, the slave-system had not been accompanied by the same oppression and hatred; and the slaves, when freed, settled down amicably by the side of their former masters to maintain development. They had been decently treated in the days of slavery, and the social legacy of the group was thus as different as possible from that of the Antilles.

The ferocious battle of classes in the West Indies received a new, almost a sardonical, interpretation after 1870. A decree of December 3 of that year introduced universal suffrage to the Old Colonies and made their *Conseils-généraux* veritable local Parliaments, with powers far more extensive than their counterparts in France itself.<sup>10</sup> This meant that the blacks had an overwhelming majority at the electoral urn (not one man in forty was a Frenchman by race!), and, what was equally important, power to make their wishes effective. At one stroke, they were given supremacy over their fellow-voters, the French planters, and power to hinder the permanent French officials. They had all the rights and none of the responsibility, and the island became a tragico-comical field of unleashed and unrestrained racial hatreds. The Europeans, realizing their impotence, usually refrained from voting, and even the pure-blooded negroes are content to let power fall to the mulattoes, who form what Girault calls "the democratic element in the Antilles."<sup>11</sup> The blacks, by not taking the trouble to vote, add a new element to the farce: they will trouble only to that degree which is necessary to give them predominance. At the elections of 1919, for instance, only 32 per cent. of the number of enfranchised persons voted in Martinique and 37 per

<sup>9</sup> Chemin-Dupontès (1907), *op. cit.*, p. 188 *et seq.*—a very able analysis.

<sup>10</sup> *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National, 1889-1890*, Vol. II, p. 21 *et seq.*; P. Dislère, *Traité de Législation Coloniale*, Vol. I, p. 371, or Vol. II, Chap. 8; François, *Le Budget Local des Colonies* (1908), p. 94.

<sup>11</sup> Messimy, *Notre Œuvre Coloniale* (1910), p. 368; Girault, 1922, 2.1.617.

cent. in Guadeloupe. As a periodical diversion, however, the negroes protest against the supremacy of the half-caste mulattoes—not by overwhelming them in the elections, be it noted, but, as in 1899–1900, by a series of fires and strikes and riots!

Bigoted class-interests,—it might almost be said, unintelligent class-interests,—thus dominate the politics of the Antilles. Each class is against the other, and none considers the general interests of the State. In particular, the *gaspillage* of State finances<sup>12</sup> for the benefit of particular sections has become a byword in French colonial history,—“a veritable pillage,” as even a colonial organ admitted.<sup>13</sup> In the decade of full prosperity after 1872, for instance, when the colonies were never more favourably situated, improvidence reached absurd levels, and there were never less reserves or public works!<sup>14</sup> Idle political quarrels absorbed all attention, the State and communal interests none. The Governors were without complete authority (and it seemed a singular stroke of irony that, in the only French colony where local liberties were allowed, they should have been offered to irresponsible negroes!): the local assemblies were either incompetent or deliberately transformed themselves into instruments of class-bitterness: public opinion was uneducated and simply emotional: the financial system was ludicrous: and the general administrative organization was unduly costly and complicated.<sup>15</sup> As a result, the crucial economic questions of the day were not considered, although the very existence of the island communities depended on a solution of these problems: it was only the political canker that was fed. Expert observers therefore insist that the root of the trouble is not economic but political, and, going still further back to the root of things, psychological. The decadence of the islands is due as much to the social errors of the past and the character-defects of the Antilleans as to the State's improvidence. The latter is the result and not the cause of the former. It is little wonder that, when France considers the results of her few limited efforts to emancipate the colonies from a political point of view, and sees the conditions of the negroes of the Antilles and of the Senegalese communes, or of the Indians of the five towns, she is distinctly averse to repeating or extending the experiment.

As time went on, the French came to consider this political drift as irremediable, and to concentrate on the economic problem which was, at least for the most part, freed from emotional and racial complications,

<sup>12</sup> G. François, *Le Budget Local des Colonies* (1908), p. 105 *et seq.*

<sup>13</sup> *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, 1900, p. 290.

<sup>14</sup> Chemin-Dupontès (1907), *op. cit.*, p. 215.

<sup>15</sup> It was extreme assimilation. See paper in *Compte Rendu des Travaux du Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1909, p. 203. For general faults, see *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, 10/3/06, p. 157.

The problem in this connection was twofold,—internal and external. It was as much concerned with the revolutionizing of methods within the colonies as with striving to counteract the effects of the fall in sugar-prices. The first change was greatly hastened by the results of emancipation, but it had been slowly emerging as the result of economic pressure even before that date. Before about 1860, industry and agriculture were confused in the Antilles. Most planters both grew the cane and extracted the crude sugar from it. But emancipation meant the rise of far smaller properties, and the new negro owners could not afford to have crushing-mills on each tiny plot of land. There had to be centralization: each group of adjacent properties had to have one mill between all of its members, and gradually, especially after 1862, it was seen that the most efficient method was to centralize and industrialize the refining process. Even the larger estates saw that they could obtain an easier and greater yield by handing over the refining part of production to industrialists. The 1,520 windmill-refineries of 1860 thus gave way to a smaller number of large and efficient industrial concerns,—a transformation that was aided by the extensive investment of French capital just at this juncture.<sup>16</sup>

To aid the colonies over the crisis, and indeed to compensate them in some measure for what they deemed the overweening morality of the mother-land, France had instituted a special form of bank in the islands in 1851. These banks existed only to aid the colonies over times of crisis, like that of emancipation or that due to the competition of beet. It was such specialized banks that have allowed the sugar-islands to survive, because it is no exaggeration to say that, without their aid, the island-communities could not have existed. They allowed the large proprietors to carry on in the troublesome fifties: they assisted the smaller owners after the transformation of 1848: and they hastened the industrialization of production by guaranteeing the early mills. They were safety-valves for times of explosion, so that their State-guaranteed advances have time and again saved the islands. Combined with the *Crédit Foncier Colonial*, which was founded in 1863 to aid industry and embarrassed planters on ordinary occasions, they have proven the greatest credit-aid France has ever given to any colony, although it was too much to expect any banking institution to survive a crisis of such a duration.<sup>17</sup>

The length of the crisis in the long run triumphed over everything,—

<sup>16</sup> Chemin-Dupontès (1907), *op. cit.*, p. 215.

<sup>17</sup> Documents relating to their origin are in J. L. de Lanessan, *L'Expansion Coloniale de la France* (1886), p. 972 *et seq.* For need of reorganization, see *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, 10/9/07, pp. 710-716.

the newer industrialization as well as the Government's credit-facilities. For twenty-four years after 1882 the lowest price of sugar was not high enough to allow production to continue. The Government tried bounties on sugar-exports (1886), but, although this device temporarily increased the amount of sugar sent to England and the United States, it in no sense influenced the more general question of world-production. Even this revival was offset, too, by the French tariff-law of 1892. The extreme assimilation thus brought in was the last blow. The colonies lost the power of fixing their own tariff, and, though receiving no compensation, had to submit to the exclusionist policy of the mother-land. American products, having to pay the same duties as on entering France, were thus kept out, and the Antilles were artificially wrenched away from that market for which nature had so obviously devised them, and forcibly attached to France. This came just at the moment when the continued over-production was making the sugar-bounties of less and less avail, and meant a new crisis.<sup>18</sup> In 1895 commerce was down to 60 million francs, —a level not reached since 1848. In other words, the new crisis was just as bad as the one due to emancipation had been. This, the Mount Pelé eruption, and the fall of prices again in 1900–1904, completed the tale of disaster, the commerce of 1904 being the lowest on record. The abolition of sugar-bounties at the Brussels Conference in 1904 produced a temporary improvement by the rise in prices, but this could not change the basic weakness of the Antilles,<sup>19</sup> and the islands simply dragged on, with a commerce in the vicinity of 60 million francs a year. Guadeloupe in particular, where there is less capital and far smaller estates, has gone down and down, so much so that there seems little hope of a permanent recovery as long as the island conditions remain unaltered.

It is comparatively easy in this connection to blame the world-parity and do nothing, or to prosper by the temporary eclipse of beet-sugar during the war-years. But neither of these attitudes touches the real problem, which is that Guadeloupe and Martinique have wilfully scattered their resources and refused to develop their lands in other directions than that of the ubiquitous sugar-planting. The colonies have largely themselves to blame, both for their economic and political weaknesses. They are monoculture countries, and saw other monoculture lands, like the West African possessions, suffer from their dependence on one commodity. In addition, the events of 1850–1852, and especially the crises after 1884, had been perfectly clear in their warning,—a warning which

<sup>18</sup> *Compte Rendu du Congrès du Régime Douanier Colonial* (Marseille, 1925), p. 428 et seq.

<sup>19</sup> *Compte Rendu du Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1909, p. 608; *Chemin-Dupontès* (1907), *op. cit.*, p. 251 et seq.

the Government and planters of the *English* Antilles took to heart and profited by. The French, on the contrary, have simply drifted. Trinidad and Dominica replied to the sugar-crisis by turning to other crops, especially cocoa, which has transformed their position.<sup>20</sup> Yet Martinique and Guadeloupe, despite the suitability of their soil for these other crops, and despite the presence of adequate labour-supplies, have practically no exports except sugar and its derivative, rum. They have not even made any moves to *try* to alter this position for the better. It is easy to complain that island-affairs made history like a dirge, and idle to point to the racial frictions and make them an excuse for evading the real issue. The truth of the matter is that, the world-crisis notwithstanding, France has refused to look realities in the face in the Antilles, and has adopted the easier policy of a protesting drift. Practically every recommendation of the English Commission of 1896 on the Antilles applies to the French islands to-day,—and it is a sufficient commentary on the sterile nature of the interim period that this should be so. The French brought their troubles on themselves by their conduct in the period of slavery: they stereotyped that trouble by their inapplicable reforms and their *laissez-faire* attitude to the financial *gaspillage* and the political scandals: and they shut the door on progress by accepting the verdict of the sugar-crisis as final. The second French Republic met the crisis by energetic credit-schemes and Governmental intervention: but the Third Republic did nothing except extract a Tartarin-like kind of joy from the absurdities of island-politics, and lament the world crisis in sugar-affairs.

The reforms needed are obvious.<sup>21</sup> The entire governmental and financial machine needs overhauling. The *Conseil-général* and the system of parliamentary representation are absurd as applied to the negro population of the Antilles in their present stage. The labour-supply needs training and disciplining, and the whole industrial process to be brought up to date, as it is admittedly inferior to that of Hawaii,—indeed, only one-half as efficient.<sup>22</sup> The credit-system is backward and no longer meets the required needs: it, too, needs modernization, with one comprehensive central bank. The tariff of 1892 is ruinous as applied to a part of America, as Congresses from the time of that of 1906 have never wearied of pointing out. Then, if the islands are to live, the spread

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, the minute report in C. 5369,—Report of Royal Commission on the West Indies (London, 1897-8), 5 parts.

<sup>21</sup> The needs are summarized in Chemin-Dupontès (1907), p. 329, or A. Blancon, *La Crise de la Guadeloupe. Les Réformes* (1920), or *Congrès du Régime Douanier Colonial* (Marseille, 1925), p. 428.

<sup>22</sup> A. Sarraut, *La Mise en Valeur des Colonies Françaises* (1923), p. 262.

of the new crops—cotton and coffee <sup>23</sup> and cocoa—is absolutely inevitable. But the list might be indefinitely extended, for every part of island life, if a mere formulation of schemes availed anything. It is the attitude of France that counts, and France seems to be in a slough of despond in this connection, and to think that the islands are not worth troubling over, and that the evils, racial and political and economic alike, are so much legacies of the past that they are ineradicable. Even Albert Sarraut, optimist as he was in every other colonial field, could not escape this prevalent despair. And naturally, so long as this pessimism holds the field, then so long is any reform impossible, because, under the negro-ridden conditions of Martinique and Guadeloupe, any reform depends primarily on the activities of the French Government through its executive officers on the spot. The comparative prosperity of the war-years, and especially of 1919-1920, temporary though this was, afforded an excellent opportunity for starting reforms: yet nothing was done, and, although conditions are not as intrinsically bad as they were before 1904, the islands limp on from year to year—self-confessed failures, with a positively declining production.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Guadeloupe already has 6,000 hectares of land under coffee to 10,000 under sugar-cane, but only 6 per cent. of the exports (1922) are of coffee and cocoa.

<sup>24</sup> E.g. the number of metric-quintals of sugar exported by the two islands declined from 667,740 in 1913-14 to 558,250 in 1920-21 and 527,200 in 1921-22.



## CHAPTER XIII

### FRANCE IN THE PACIFIC (TRANSPORTATION)

**I**N the early years of last century, when the affairs of the native kingdoms in the Pacific were in a state of chaos, France earned the reputation of having a distinct, although severely materialistic, policy there. The position was peculiar in many ways. The Polynesian kingdoms were avowedly drifting to destruction. Most of them were monarchies, or confederations of monarchies, based on the rule of custom,—an elaborate system extending to every sphere of life and depending on the unquestioned rule of *tabu*. This meant that, if an individual infringed in any way against the rules of his society, he would be visited by the vengeance of the gods. Society was on a basis of supernatural sanctions; its maintenance depended on the continued dread of the people,—on the continuance of the fear-*motif*. Once they questioned, once they endeavoured to turn the light of reason on to the social and political organization, the whole structure collapsed. Yet that is just what had happened in the last years of the eighteenth century. The European navigators had come, had defied the *tabus*, and, marvellous to relate, had survived. At once, an unreasoning iconoclasm arose. The natives emulated the voyagers and also survived. Then the Pacific Islanders, bereft of their past and seeing nothing in the future, were whirled down a path of destructive change. Their religion, their social organization, their economic laws, their political structure all decayed: and their lives knew neither order nor stability. Their rulers were hard pressed to preserve their authority: the whole organization was shattered: and everywhere there was a drift.<sup>1</sup>

At this particularly auspicious moment, the new forces of the Occident entered to complicate the change. Economic life left the barter-stage when goods were produced for foreign markets, and European Powers came to covet the islands, or at least, to want them so disorganized that they could drain them of as much wealth as possible. Annexation would have necessitated organization, and seemed needless when the Europeans could so easily profit by the disintegration of native existence: and this

<sup>1</sup> S. H. Roberts, *Population Problems of the Pacific* (1927), Chap. 2.

trend was unwittingly fostered when England, under the influence of the Exeter Hall philanthropists and the anti-colonial movement, resolved to recognize the native kingdoms as independent in international law. She persisted in this policy until at least 1880, not seeing how it was a *laissez-faire* abandonment of responsibilities and a refusal to look facts in the face. The result was that a clear field was left for France, whose gunboats were not so conscience-ridden. The French therefore terrorized Tahiti, browbeat Hawaii, and interfered in the life of practically every group, even in far-off New Zealand. Her corvettes and a missionary system which was avowedly Imperialistic made her the most aggressive force in the life of the Pacific in the first half of the century,—and an added burden to the natives.<sup>a</sup>

France, especially under Louis Philippe, was definitely making a bid for supremacy in the Pacific. To make her control more immediate, a protectorate was instituted over Tahiti in 1843, while New Caledonia, on the other side of the ocean, was annexed in 1853. This was the nucleus of her Pacific possessions, which, with subsidiaries seized at later dates, came to form two groups. In Polynesia, under the group-name of the Society Islands, the Marquesas and the Leeward Islands were added to Tahiti; and, across in the Melanesian world, France obtained equal rights with Great Britain in a Condominium over the New Hebrides. The islands thus secured were not important as far as trade or population was concerned, but they had a definite strategic value, and New Caledonia, in particular, became important as the scene of France's main experiment in penal colonization.

### I. Tahiti

Tahiti was the earliest French settlement in the Pacific. When the French went there, it was a well-organized native kingdom, having been forced into the path of progress by agents of the London Missionary Society in the years after 1815. The missionaries had issued codes of law and had inaugurated a Parliamentary constitution on the most orthodox lines of British liberalism (1819). Economic life was similarly organized, and although the vagaries of the native rulers, the Pomarès, could not be entirely controlled, Tahiti was at least as well managed as any other native kingdom of that date. But France took no account of this and forcibly occupied the group in 1844. Strange to relate, the French Parliament, looking ahead and seeing how the opening of the Panama Canal might make the group the trade *entrepôt* for all the Central American coast, enthusiastically supported the scheme, unimaginatively *bourgeois* though their attitude usually was under the Monarchy of July. They

<sup>a</sup> G. Scholefield, *The Pacific: Its Past and Future* (1920), p. 12 *et seq.*

even stood firm when British diplomacy took up the cause of its aggrieved nationals and seemed not averse to forcing a breach.<sup>3</sup>

The natives, who were not then as demoralized and supinely lifeless as they afterwards became, resisted the French advance for four years, but their camps on the volcanic crests of Fatahua could not hold out for ever, and by 1847 the islands were at the mercy of the French. Until 1880, they were under a protectorate administration which even French writers join in condemning.<sup>4</sup> As Deschanel wrote, "we were the masters of the situation, and had no enemies except ourselves." The administration was such that it kept the group stagnant, destroyed native life almost entirely, and introduced the word *tracasserie* as a synonym for French colonial efforts. Fifteen Governors were sent out in thirty-six years, wits saying that the principle governing their selection was that Paris had no further place to which to send them! Of the fifteen, only two, de la Richerie (1860-1863) and de la Roncière (1863-1869), tried to do anything at all. The former introduced a set of reforms, the latter annulled them!

Everything was either grotesquely official, or, when it shed its grotesqueness, either tragic or corrupt. Thus, in the early years, one Governor, Casset, made himself the subject of ridicule by sending a file of men in the dead of night to arrest the joyfully irresponsible native ruler,—a newer Flight from Varennes. His successor, de la Richerie, "ended as he began,—by extracting from the Tahitians everything they possessed"; and after him, de la Roncière had to be brought away by a specially dispatched Government frigate because he had so shamefully corrupted justice.<sup>5</sup> With these exceptions, as has been seen, every other Governor did nothing, although under the circumstances such toleration might almost be construed as a virtue.

The colony was given over to minor officials. Young ensigns made every description of *arrêté*, so that "it was next to impossible for the natives to know what they might, or might not, do, so variable were all the regulations relating to them." There were officials for every conceivable purpose, even a Minister of the Interior, although the island was so mountainous and inaccessible that only pigs dwelt in his domain. An official report of this time naïvely admitted that "the colonists have recently raised a certain amount of outcry against the number of officials,"

<sup>3</sup> For documents relating to annexation, see Dubois et Terrier, *Un Siècle d'Expansion Coloniale* (1902), pp. 232, 1026 *et seq.*; or *Le Régime des Protectorats*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 899, p. 396.

<sup>4</sup> F. Soulier-Valbert, *L'Expansion Française dans le Pacifique Sud* (1911), Chap. 5 *et seq.*

<sup>5</sup> For this period see D. Hort, *Tahiti* (1891), Chap. 14, or L. Jocolliot, *La Vérité sur Tahiti* (1869).

but nothing was done to stop the evil. Even after the protectorate-rule gave way in 1880, thirty-one Governors were sent out in forty years,—a rapidity of recall that naturally prevented any continuity of policy and still more any schemes of reform.<sup>6</sup>

By 1920 it was little wonder that a deadlock had been reached under these conditions. The Government services without exception had acting-staffs: there was no *juge de carrière*: there was no Secretary-General, because he was the acting Governor: there was no educational chief: the Customs were so disorganized that there had been no statistics for two years: and the survey Chief had to leave his own functions and become in turn leader of the Mines Department, Chief of Public Works, and the Governor's chief of Cabinet!<sup>7</sup> Yet the colony was overridden with officials. In a population of 10,000, the budget provided for 510 permanent officials, and every tiniest community lived under the surveillance of the ever-present *gendarme*. As contrasted with this, the neighbouring Cook Island, under New Zealand, had three officials for 30,000 inhabitants! In Papeete the officials lived in palaces and maintained viceregal pomp on the approved model of the Pomarès: "they are many in number and produce no visible result." But in the neighbouring British colony of Rarotonga, the Government offices were a little shed by the wharves, and it was jocularly remarked that one could buy postage stamps and postcards from the Permanent Head of the Treasury!<sup>8</sup> Behind this railleury, there was a considerable difference: the French colony was governed by an arid official-class but with all the frills of tropical romance—Loti up-to-date; whereas the English, confining its romance to the ramshackle dwellings that served as offices, gave punctuality and efficiency. Tahiti remained the Paradise of the Pacific, Papeete a merry little Paris in an environment of flame-trees and bougainvilleas and honey-coloured Polynesians, but as a well-organized colony simply did not exist.

Attempts to give the settlers a share in the Government were equally futile. A Council-General was set up on the usual French model in 1885, but from the first confined its duties to quarrelling with the executive. Elections were tumultuous, and, one might say, at times ultra-efficient, as when 450 votes were recorded for 200 people! The Council's violently antagonistic attitude commenced as early as 1895, when the Governor for the time being was so insulted in the Chamber that he had to leave. However, the dozen representatives—bakers and wine-merchants and

<sup>6</sup> *L'Océanie Française*, Dec. 1922. Resulted in "le règne de l'intérimat, règne néfaste qui exclut toute initiative."

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan.-March, 1920.

<sup>8</sup> G. Calderon, *Tahiti* (1921), p. 32.

butchers—continued to meet in their petrol-fumed room and to harass the administration,—to the vast enjoyment of the general public, who were admitted and added to the general interest by familiarly chatting with their delegates in conference assembled. Such quarrels have continued up to the present. In 1924, for instance, a new tax on bread was bitterly contested, because the councillors were themselves, in other capacities, connected with the bakers. As an observer summed up the situation, the Council came to mean irresponsible criticism of an irresponsible administration. "More solicitous of their rights than their duties, and as careless of the one as of the other, most of the members of these assemblies, either by calculation or vanity, exaggerated the extent of their powers, and soon made the successive Governors regret this over-liberal measure of assimilation,—I could say, of premature emancipation of a people not yet ready for the exercise of liberty, and still less for a share in power." <sup>9</sup> Apart from hindering the administration, the main result of the council scheme was to introduce political discords which led to what was known as "Coral Fever,"—an unreasoning spirit of social cleavage. The scheme was a farce, its results tragic in a small isolated community.

But it was in the native field that the tragic element emerged most clearly. The Tahitians, and especially the Marquesans, had been amongst the finest of the Polynesian types,—fine examples of a fine race. Their political organization, their adaptability to the new economic system of the missionaries, and their voyaging prowess had all shown this in various fields; but the French simply, and of set purpose, hastened the disintegration of native life. They destroyed the chiefly system of Tahiti and sapped the *morale* of the ruling Pomarès. They made no attempt to keep up the missionaries' endeavours to instil ideas of regular work into native minds. To the contrary, they either passively watched, or deliberately hastened the new anti-social agencies, especially in the sixties. The old order was going, and the French welcomed this rather than be troubled with a strong native element. To the *dolce far niente* of the indolent tropical life was joined their openly disruptive influence: and the result was racial decay for a stock that was already enfeebled and that could not distinguish between liberty and licence. The Tahitians declined; the Marquesans, though outwardly still more physically fit, were practically annihilated. The population-movements of the Tahitians during the last century are still uncertain, though it is clear that the coming of the Europeans entailed the disappearance of the Marquesans. From 20,000 in 1848 they have dwindled to about a thousand to-day,

<sup>9</sup> J. Agostini, *Tahiti* (1905), pp. 17-19; Montchoisy, *La Nouvelle Cythère* (1888), p. 108.

and not a sound physical specimen survives. The vitality seems to have gone from the race, and, lacking the will to live, they wither and give way, just as the fragrant *frangipani* of their islands wilts and fades.<sup>10</sup> Adaptation to changing circumstances now seems beyond their power, and, in all of French Oceania, only one group, the Leeward Islands, with its hardy pearl-fishers, has an increasing population. The result has been that, even if France desired the economic modernization of these islands, this would be prevented by the lack of population and by the chronic indolence of those who survive. Island problems always come back to this phase of the situation, which is naturally an inexorable limit placed on advance.

As a result of the French attitude and the position of the natives, the Tahitian group remained, and still remains, undeveloped. The land is rich and permits other crops than the ubiquitous coco-nut of the Pacific : yet copra was for long the only product and even that to the extent of only 8,000 tons a year. Even in the nineties, the total exports were no more than £110,000, although the concentration on cotton and vanilla since that time has added hopeful features to the situation. By 1912, for instance, the exports of vanilla amounted to £240,000, as compared with £200,000 of copra ; but vanilla demands a painstaking labour-supply, and the Polynesians of Tahiti cannot continuously be relied upon for the work of fertilizing the vanilla blooms,—“marrying the vanilla,” as the natives facetiously remark. The economic history of the group has thus been spasmodic. The opening of the Panama Canal, with the unfounded hopes that it engendered, led to a feverish activity before 1914, but the reaction was worse than the disease. Then again, after the inanition of the war-period, the commencement of Indo-Chinese immigration to New Caledonia, and after 1925 to Tahiti itself, once more provoked inordinate hopes, but of necessity leads to a similar disillusion. Tahiti offers limited and slow possibilities in the direction of developing several staples, but cannot expect to think of achievement unless capital and, more essential, labour-supplies are available in adequate and suitable quantities. Until then, the atmosphere of romantic indolence, the inconsequential side of life so aptly caught by Loti and Calderon, must remain the forces—and distinctly enervating forces—at the back of island life. Romance—and what romance there is is disease-lined—must give way to balance-sheets, but the French are loath to make the change, and are satisfied to let the tropical languor creep in over their thoughts. They allow the Chinese immigrants to capture all of the retail and most of the wholesale trade of the group. The land, while nominally French, is rapidly becoming an economic dependency of the Chinese,

<sup>10</sup> S. H. Roberts, *Population Problems of the Pacific* (1927), p. 91 *et seq.*

—so much so that the *Revue du Pacifique* already describes it as “ unquestionably Chinese.”

The French establishments in Oceania thus remain picturesquely undeveloped.<sup>11</sup> Their isolation allows this, the temperament of the natives makes anything else difficult, and the sterile nature of French officialdom there clinches the result. The future of the islands therefore rests with outside immigrants, either, as up to the present, the Chinese, or, as the French hope since the Sarraut revival, with the indentured Indo-Chinese. But, however this may be, the group so far, with the exception of the prosperous Leeward Islands, has contributed little towards France, save a haven for the least efficient of her minor officials. On the other hand, it has provided a crop of problems out of all relation to its own size and importance,—native problems, Chinese problems, and problems of government and economics. Beyond this, the islands are in the same position as they were fifty years ago, especially as fulfilling the economic and strategic hopes of their founders. They are survivals of an age that has gone, and represent even that age in a *rococo* and ludicrous form. The obvious remedies of efficiency and modernization exist as yet only on paper. The islands are 10,000 miles from Paris, and everybody is happy there, even in their quarrels: therefore, why change things, runs the customary French attitude? The lantana spreads and the hibiscus grows: the natives decline, but those who remain are luscious tawny morsels for the French: the evil comes and goes for the good: and, after all, is not the island-world ruled by “ *ari’ana*,”—“ there is to-morrow ”? The islanders’ drowsily insidious code has enwrapped French mentality there, and, if more is needed, then the cafés under the flame-trees afford all the pleasures of Paris. Tahiti represents the spirit of colonization drugged and confused by the gentle, and ever so desirable, lasciviousness of those tropical lands where existence is easy and the natives complaisant. “ *Ari’ana* ”—“ there is to-morrow ”: but so far, not for Tahiti.

## II. New Caledonia

### TRANSPORTATION

On the other side of the ocean, the French purpose was radically different. France went there for a brutally material purpose,—to find a gaol for the *gamins* of Paris and the *nervis* of Marseilles, and consciously subordinated every detail of the island’s life to that fact.

<sup>11</sup> *Annuaire de Tahiti*, 1914, pp. 100–103; *L’Océanie Française*, May 1923 (Guieyasse), for Marquesas.

New Caledonia has nothing in common with Tahiti. It belongs to the continental type of Pacific Islands and is rather a tiny continent than a group like Tahiti. It has no picturesque or lazy pearl-lagoons. Rather is it a forbidding harsh land,—a mountain of minerals whose outcrops gash the sides of the hills and remind the observer of the quarry-walls of the Pyrenees. The natives, too, are poles apart from the merry Polynesians. They are the lowest of the black Melanesians, infinitely more archaic and repulsive, and more like the negritos than the gentle tawny Polynesians, who are almost Caucasians.

At first, until 1864, New Caledonia drifted along the usual lines of French effort. The natives were pushed back; expeditionary corps were overland to Ourail by 1859: elaborate towns, like Napoléonville, were planned in the wilderness: and a few free settlers spread to the basins of Dumbéa and Paita. One energetic Governor, Guillaïn (1862-1870), fostered this and tried group settlement, incidentally attempting to vitalize colonial existence by organizing justice and making roads and commencing native education. But, before he left, the deciding force in New Caledonian existence had entered,—the first grey-clad convicts had landed at Ile Nou.<sup>12</sup>

France very elaborately experimented with transportation as a means of colonization in last century. Much attention was devoted to the question, and there was little of that haphazard empiricism which was so characteristic of colonial policy in other directions. France knew what she wanted and scientifically worked out the solution, taking care to correlate her theory and practice. The actual scheme was another result of Louis Napoléon's inventiveness, although it was of a more practical nature than most of his innovations in colonial matters. Pointing to the 6,000 convicts who idled or died in the hulks and prisons, he said that "it appears to me possible to make forced labour more efficacious and moralizing, less costly and more humane, by utilizing the convicts to further French colonization." After several attempts, a scheme was worked out in 1852 and finalized in May, 1854. Henceforth, a person sentenced to forced labour was to work it out in the public-works of some colony other than Algeria. Those convicted for less than eight years were to remain in the colony for an equal period after their release, while those serving longer terms were to stay there for ever. This *doublage*, as it was called, was one of the main features of the plan: it was the sequel, so to speak, of the period of training. To brighten the outlook to some degree, however, convicts who distinguished themselves

<sup>12</sup> P. Cordeil, *Origines et Progrès de la Nouvelle Calédonie* (1885), pp. 48, 49. This period is fully covered in C. Savole, *Histoire de la Nouvelle Calédonie* (1922), p. 19 *et seq.*



by good conduct were to be allowed to work for themselves and receive grants of land.<sup>12</sup>

This régime was in due course established by a decree of May 27, 1854 : but the problem was, where to send the convicts ? Guiana had been tried two years before, but the authorities deemed the guillotine a more satisfactory method of execution than either malaria or the poisoned darts of jungle natives, so they looked elsewhere. West Africa and Tahiti were considered, but, when too many difficulties rose in connection with them, New Caledonia was chosen (1863). The first convicts arrived in the next year, and, between 1867 and 1887, the island was the only place of transportation for white convicts. Obock, Gabun, and Guiana were tried at intervals, but it was in New Caledonia that the experiment of transportation centred and assumed its largest form. By 1908 21,841 convicts were sent out, although the number in the island at any one time was never greatly in excess of 7,000, and, of these, it was estimated that only an average of 5,000 were fit to be employed. The percentage of wastage was as high as it always is in any convict system of this kind.

The system was very much akin to that which had pertained at an earlier date in the Australian colonies. Though there was a more elaborate definition under the French scheme, both systems had the same basic idea of making convict labour productive in the colonies, and after a period of probation, assigning individual convicts to farmers or allowing them to establish themselves on the land. On landing, all alike went to the centre on Ile Nou, when they were drafted to road-camps of from fifteen to thirty convicts apiece. The incorrigibles, who were not a negligible proportion of the whole, were sent to the dreaded disciplinary-camp, and, chained two by two like oxen, were a familiar sight labouring on the roads or hauling the mountain railway-trucks. If, on the other hand, they were adjudged meritorious, they received four to five hectares of land in the administration reserve, or were allowed, as *engagés*, to labour for free colonists.

In addition to the convicts pure and simple, two other classes of persons were transported. Political offenders (*déportés*) had been sent to the Marquesas since 1850, but the insurrection of 1871 necessitated a larger receptacle for the unwanted politicians of the metropolis. Hence, a law of March, 1872, concentrated all convicts, political and otherwise, on New Caledonia. Such political offenders, it is true, did not have to work on the roads and were allowed to bring out their families. On

<sup>12</sup> J. B. Alberti, *Étude sur la Colonisation à la Nouvelle Calédonie* (1909), p. 57 et seq. ; d'Haussonville, *Les Établissements pénitentiaires en France et aux colonies*, Chap. 17 ; or A. Bernard, *L'Archipel de la Nouvelle Calédonie* (1894), Chap. 9.

the whole, they were an especially privileged class, being forced colonists more than anything else. Starting in September, 1872, more than 3,924 were sent from France in all, and, to add variety, a few Arab rebels and recalcitrant Camoriens from the Indian Ocean joined the throng.<sup>14</sup>

Far more important were the "exiles" or *régulés*. A law of May 27, 1885, sentenced to transportation all persons who had amassed a certain number of convictions in the preceding ten years. It instituted a mechanical purge of undesirables. "It has for its principal object the placing at a distance from the metropolis of those persons who constitute a menace to public security." The earlier law had failed to reach those vagabonds or incorrigibles who did not commit crimes sufficiently serious to receive a long-term sentence. These were the *récidivistes* proper,—the men who, without sinning greatly, left their country for their country's good. As amended by a law of 1885, relegation came to mean perpetual internment in a colony, either in groups or as individuals. The exiles, so long as they wore the distinctive blue uniform (not the despised grey of the convicts proper), could become labourers or farmers or contractors as they pleased. No restriction was placed on their individual activities: they had only to stay away from France.<sup>15</sup>

It is curious how this part of the experiment failed from first to last. When it was first mooted, the Press and the colonial governors bitterly attacked it. "Colonization cannot take place with idlers, any more than a locomotive can run without coal," asserted Léveillé in the Deputies, and the *Temps* emphatically supported this attitude.<sup>16</sup> As a result, the original project was considerably modified. The decree of 1885 had specifically arranged that such men should construct public works in the colonies, but the free colonies resisted so strenuously that not a single one was ever sent to any of them. Only Guiana and New Caledonia were compelled to take them, and then only in comparatively small numbers.

They went to New Caledonia only between 1887 and 1897, and, even there, never exceeded 2,800 in number. Most of them worked as "collectives" in gangs. Some built roads, others worked in the forests, but the majority provided the labour-supply for the mines that were opening up at that time. But, despite the relative success in the last-mentioned sphere, they were not a desirable element in the colony. Habits of idleness were too deeply ingrained for them to face the rude life of pioneering;

<sup>14</sup> Alberti (1909), *op. cit.*, pp. 27-29.

<sup>15</sup> E. Petit, *Organisation des Colonies Françaises*, Vol. II (1895), p. 32; Dislère, *Traité de Législation Coloniale*, Vol. I, p. 1018; Alberti (1909), *op. cit.*, p. 32 *et seq.*

<sup>16</sup> Report in *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National*, 1889-1890, p. 97; *Temps* (Paris), 18/6/84; or the Lanessan interpellation in *Journal Officiel*, *Déps.*, 30/6/89.

indeed, so much was this so, that an official statement of 1887 said that not 5 per cent. of them were useful in the colony. In the island itself they were most unpopular. The other convicts treated them as pariahs and dubbed them *pièces du Chili*, the reference being to the highly ornate but frequently bad coins so prevalent at that date in the Pacific. The real convicts were said to have energy on occasion and character of a kind,—certainly they were enterprising criminals. But the “exiles” were half-way men, petty persons who knew “*ni ressort ni courage*.” Apart from working in the mines, therefore, their only contribution to the colony, according to Alberti, the student of New Caledonian colonization, was the purely negative one of providing a slightly wider market for commerce!

By the time this experiment failed, attention was turned once more to the convicts proper. In the eighties in particular, an attempt had been made to systematize the whole scheme and make New Caledonia a model of penal colonization. This took the form of providing a continual avenue of progress for each convict from the hulk to a farm of his own. A decree of August, 1884, set aside 110,000 hectares as a minimum for convict settlement and definitely commenced the policy of converting the native reserves into areas for such settlement as the demand should increase. But this ambitious project had to halt before two factors,—the unsuitable nature of the raw material with which it had to deal, and the opposition of the free colonists. The latter was the more immediate of the two. The colonists asserted that the convict-reserves absorbed nearly all of the agricultural land and that the farming revival of the nineties would be cut short unless the Government’s policy was restrained. In view of this opposition, decrees from 1897 onwards reduced the area of the reserves and, by implication, admitted the failure of the attempt to make New Caledonia a huge convict-farm. Moreover, such convict-settlement as had been tried could only be described as farcical in its results,—and inevitably so. “As soon as a man is liberated, he is thrown on the New Caledonian soil, with a little money in his pocket, great desires for independence in his mind, and all of his hitherto repressed passions to satisfy.”<sup>17</sup> The result was naturally defiance of the authorities and a repletion of the said passions in orgies impossible to describe.

A similar failure characterized convict-settlement in other directions. Assigned to settlers, they made their greater liberty a cloak for licence: assigned to domestic service, they repeated the Australian experience by serving as aids to immorality. On the land, only 868 convict-concessions were given in forty years, and this included all, unsuccessful with the successful. In the mines, owners preferred to pay Dalmatian

<sup>17</sup> P. Cordeil, *Origines et Progrès de la Nouvelle Calédonie* (1885), p. 111.

emigrants seven francs a day to giving *forçats* one! As road workers, it was estimated that convicts took two million working days to construct 66 kilometres of road,—a method of construction that worked out at 20,000 francs a kilometre!<sup>18</sup> In every field, labour on a slave-basis had either completely broken down or had proved woefully uneconomical.

These unfavourable elements of the situation came more and more to the fore as the years progressed, especially in the nineties, when more convicts were poured into the unfortunate island than at any previous time. The system, thus intensively developed, was in the first place seen to be the reverse of economical. Up to 1907, for instance, it cost nearly 147 million francs in all, the largest amount for any single year being 6½ million francs in 1883.<sup>19</sup> Over against this expense were the roads and other public-works the convicts constructed, the labour given to free settlers at a ridiculously low nominal price, and the profit drawn from the Government-farms in the mid-eighties. But these were all of the advantages, and against them were the failures recorded above, and many other difficulties, even up to diplomatic quarrels with Great Britain owing to the escape of *récédivistes* to the Australian mainland.

One other major failure must be recorded,—the failure to reform the convicts themselves, but a curious feature of the whole scheme was how little the French took this factor into account at any time. The experiment was in providing a new and cheaper material for colonizing purposes: that was how it appealed to the average Frenchman interested in the work of the colonies. In so far as the moral factor was considered at all, it was admitted that the failure was practically complete,—far more so than had been the case in Australia, probably because the material on which to work was far more degraded in the French instance. Commissions in New Caledonia left no doubt on this point. They showed how the original promiscuity and the subsequent loneliness would each fail to reform the average individual. The man went in, perverse and dangerous and criminal, it was said: he came out an unrestrained brute. At the least, the result was “a forced atrophy, both physical and moral.”<sup>20</sup>

As a result of this breakdown in so many fields, transportation came to an end, in so far as New Caledonia was concerned, in February, 1897, when, as the leading French periodical of the Pacific summed the matter up, “the tap of dirty water was shut off.” Since then, the island has been plagued by the remains of the system. The decision of 1897 only meant that no *new* convicts were to come out: Those already there remained and had to serve their sentences and stay in the island after

<sup>18</sup> *L'Océanie Française*, April 1913.

<sup>19</sup> Alberti (1909), *op. cit.*, p. 75.

<sup>20</sup> *L'Océanie Française*, July 1913.

that. However much transportation might cease, convictism had to remain in New Caledonia. Indeed, it still remains. Up to 1897, 21,630 convicts had been sent, 10,695 in the preceding ten years, so that the great majority of them remained to be dealt with when the system was discontinued. Of these, 7,222 had died and 4,684 had been freed or escaped, so that only 9,724 remained to be disposed of. At this stage, disease came to the aid of the administration, and the number dwindled to about 3,855 by 1919. The size of the problem may be gauged, however, by the fact that there were 682 full-time officials to deal with the convicts in 1895, and 229 even as late as 1913! <sup>21</sup>

Yet, failure though the system was, it is curious how a belief in penal colonization lingered, and still lingers, in French colonization. This was shown by the zeal displayed in the nineties, when as many convicts were dispatched to New Caledonia as in all the preceding decades, and by the decision of the International Colonial Congress (really a French body) in 1900 that convicts should be sent to *all* colonies that were confronted by a shortage of labour. <sup>22</sup> Then, too, Alberti, after his detailed study of the convict system in New Caledonia, followed the earlier writer Cordeil in pronouncing it a success.

"It has given satisfying results," he sums up. "The prison administration has been able to make farming experiments that would have been beyond the scope of individuals, it has constructed roads and made general public-works, it has placed much labour at the disposal of Government departments and individuals, and it has aided the transformation of the convicts into property-owners and heads of families." <sup>23</sup>

But, as has been seen, these purely general advantages cannot bear analysis, and, in summing up thus, Alberti abandons his studiously objective point of view by quoting general advantages without placing opposite them the equivalent defects.

A balance has to be arrived at, and certainly the experience of New Caledonia would rather seem to justify the conclusion of Jules Harmand, —that "economically, penal colonization is an absurdity; from the colonial point of view, it is a scandal; and morally, it is a crime." <sup>24</sup> Neither the State nor the convicts benefited in proportion to the outlay

<sup>21</sup> *L'Océanie Française*, Jan. 1913, May-Aug. 1918. For the abolition, see articles in *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, Jan.-March 1898 (Beauchet), or the Girault Report to *Compte Rendu des Travaux du Congrès Colonial International*, 1900, p. 139.

<sup>22</sup> *L'Année Coloniale*, 1900, p. 77. For this attitude, compare *Recueil des Délibérations du Congrès Colonial National*, 1889-1890, Vol. II, p. 289 et seq., or Gallieni's *Rapports d'ensemble* on Madagascar, —1st, 1899, p. 211; 2nd, 1905, p. 517.

<sup>23</sup> Alberti (1909), *op. cit.*, p. 199; Cordeil (1885), *op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>24</sup> J. Harmand, *Domination et Colonisation* (1910), p. 148.

involved, and, in particular, the stigma attached to any colony by being made a gaol imposes a burden on its development for decades. Transportation fails to meet the need of any section concerned with it. The only thing it does is to offer a theoretical opportunity to the individual convict,—and the reality of even this is problematical, and, if it does exist, it is a moot point if such reclamation is to be paid for by the stagnation of the colony and the suffering of the free settlers. The balance of advantages is not there, especially from the colonial point of view. Settlement and convictism are mutually exclusive terms under modern conditions, and, when the two conflict, one has to go : there can be no compromise between them. Thus, the discovery of nickel in New Caledonia in 1875 and the subsequent awakening to the fact that the island was the richest mining country in the world in proportion to its surface really condemned the convict system. This discovery hastened the conversion of New Caledonia into a colony of settlement and into a society,—ends which were incompatible with a convict *régime*, however much the supplies of cheap labour thus afforded might aid the early exploitation of the mining areas. In the long run, the first ugly gash in the mountain-side for nickel meant that the island had become a colony instead of a gaol : transportation was doomed.

#### THE NATIVES

In the meantime, the French had dealt with the native problem in an equally concise manner,—and, it might be added, in a manner equally neglectful of human values. In 1853 it was estimated that there were 100,000 Melanesians in the islands,—a number which declined to 45,000 by 1863 and 27,100 by 1921. The natives, abjectly debased Melanesians though they were, resisted the French domination for years and were aided by the mountainous nature of the country. They were most truculent and not at all amenable to civilizing influences, being in this connection quite different from the gentle imitative Polynesians of the French Oceanic groups. The New Caledonians were more of a negroid strain, sullen in appearance and nature, and with debased institutions.

At the commencement, France saw the natives as virile but repulsive and unapproachable. But, in accordance with the ultra-liberalism of the time, a code of benefits (on strictly European models) was extended to them. That this code of 1854 took the form of reversing every native institution mattered little. It was more progressive, from the viewpoint of Paris. It set up a miniature *Code Civil*. "Assassination and cannibalism" were forbidden : imprisonment was ordained for those hardy native spirits who danced in the night : theft and adultery were likewise to be atoned for in the white man's strong-house : and edicts

were issued against such social menaces as wandering dogs and dishonest bathers ! It certainly could not be said that the administration had not thought of every conceivable and a lot of quite inconceivable contingencies. Police agents, "having for a distinctive mark tricolour stripes on the left arm," were also instituted. In short, everything was arranged for,—except an analysis of the problems provided by a native Melanesian race coming into its first contact with European ideas. No attempt was made to stem the destruction in native life that was inevitable under these conditions, and no attempt to modify French practices so that they would suit the new environment.<sup>25</sup> It was Algeria and Cochinchina over again.

So far, the French policy had been merely grotesque : at this stage, it became a tragedy, because the French were imbued with the definite idea of destroying the chiefly system. The original system of the natives was founded on strong family units, grouped together into larger tribes. But France attacked these localist units and strove to break up the families by depriving them of their land.<sup>26</sup> A tenth of the whole island was set apart for native use in 1855, and this was deemed to be sufficient for all of their needs,—and, it must be remembered, the native population at that time was thought to be rapidly increasing. Even over this, however, the Melanesians were to have only rights of sufferance, a dispatch of 1855 categorically stating that "the chiefs and natives of New Caledonia and its dependencies have never had, nor can they ever have, the right of disposing of the land occupied by them either in whole or in part."<sup>27</sup> Even this scant arrangement was opposed by most sections in the colony, where there was an ever-present temptation on the part of the administration to cut down the area of the native-reserves, under pretence of "defining" them. This helped to cause the great revolt of 1878 and gave rise to that general racial *malaise* which found expression in armed revolt as late as 1917. The present position is that the tribal lands were defined in 1897, but that arrangement is in no sense proportionate to the numerical strength of the tribes to-day.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the whole situation is dominated by the fact that New Caledonia is the only land in the French Empire, outside of Northern Algeria, in which small French colonists may settle. In 1921, the natives numbered only 28,000 in a population of 50,600, and the French, never prone at any time to attach overmuch importance to the Melanesians, regulated native affairs with this fact always before their eyes. They have thus driven back the

<sup>25</sup> S. H. Roberts, *Population Problems of the Pacific* (1927), pp. 149, 150.

<sup>26</sup> *L'Océanie Française*, March 1924.

<sup>27</sup> *Bulletin Officiel de la Nouvelle Calédonie* (Nouméa), 1871, p. 26.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* (Nouméa), 1897, pp. 563, 564.

natives to the inner mountain-country where the reserves are situated, and emphasis is much more on the opening of land to settlers than on conserving it in native hands.<sup>29</sup> The classic Algerian policy of *refoulement* finds full expression in this Melanesian country.

In recent years, however, traces of a newer native policy have been evident. Some kind of stability in numbers—perhaps the stability of exhaustion—was attained after 1885, and it became obvious that the earlier French hope that the Kanakas would soon become mere ethnological curiosities was not to be satisfied. But by this time the French had demoralized their group-life and had not trained them for the new economic conditions: hence, they had to start afresh and endeavour to rehabilitate their native charges, delivering them from the inroads of the two destructive forces,—the settlers and the sorcerers. To do this, they offered opportunity to the somewhat bewildered savages, because, as they naively related, “the experiences of forced assimilation have not been happy.” Attempts were therefore made to strengthen native society, first by reviving their customs in courts of the West African type, and then by strengthening tribal organizations. This was Governor Brunet’s policy (1914), and, as far as the first part was concerned, worked admirably. But, when it came to rebuilding the tribes, two difficulties emerged. The French tried to solve the problem by creating powerful chiefs and emphasizing the wider units of the tribe and sub-tribe; but the difficulty was that the original native system was based far more on the family than on the tribe. Still, the gap was there, and the French in part filled it; and, so long as they named energetic and capable chiefs, at least improved on the previous state of drift. The “hierarchy of stripes,” as the new system was called, was certainly less democratic than the old, but, since the old organization had irretrievably gone, it seems a trifle anomalous to argue from its conditions. The new chiefs have vindicated themselves, even with the larger tribes like that of the Houailou valley, and have made the native organization uniform and virile,—and that, after all, is the chief desideratum.<sup>30</sup>

On the whole, the native policy of the French in New Caledonia has not been particularly happy. Until 1914 at least, the old *refoulement*-motive was openly adopted, and any change of direction since then is but a tardy and quite incommensurate compensation. Tribal organization has gone, and the new Government-officials chosen among the natives are quite artificial: and the French have done little in the way of medical reform and nothing at all for the education or the economic

<sup>29</sup> E.g. in *Congrès Colonial National*, 1889–1890, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 416.

<sup>30</sup> *L’Océanie Française*, Feb. 1914, March 1924; F. Sarasin, *La Nouvelle Calédonie* (1917), pp. 36, 37.



improvement of the natives. They seem satisfied that the New Caledonians are more or less confined to the wild regions of the West and so divided by language-differences and so weakened by leprosy and tuberculosis that they cannot effectively combine against the Government: beyond that, there is practically no constructive policy. The native remains the *Canaque*, a person held in a grinning contempt that is unusual in the French colonies, and the *réserves indigènes* are viewed as land shut off from settlement by a passing whim of the administration. The new emphasis of the associationist school does not seem to have reached New Caledonia, Brunet notwithstanding. The island is 14,000 miles away from Paris, and France wants from it, not problems, but nickel and chrome.

#### AGRICULTURE

New Caledonia assumes a peculiar place in French colonization, because, except for the Algerian Tell, it is the only province they have suitable for permanent European settlement. Apart from its minerals, it is a farming and grazing country,—very much on a par, though dryer and more arid, than the corresponding latitudes of the Australian continent. Its agricultural policy has therefore played a large part in its history, and has been at times, as in the eighties and nineties of last century, the deciding factor.

At first, the position was not clear. France knew that the island was, in part at least, a land of settlement and that if the most was to be made of the opportunities that were offering there, she had to employ different rules from those she used in her tropical "*colonies d'exploitation*." Various experiments were therefore made. At the very outset, negotiations were entered upon with a view to introducing 600 Irish families, but this fell through when transportation was finally adopted. But isolated settlers crept up the valleys on the west coast, and Australians came across to spread over the basins of Dumbéa and Paita (1858), and then Creoles of the over-populated Réunion. By 1870, 1,562 European settlers were firmly established, and the movement received a big impetus when de la Richerie introduced something like the Australian squatting-system in 1871. By this, people could settle anywhere and could either lease or buy their land when it came to be surveyed at a later date: in a word, they could settle down anywhere they liked with no formality. The idea was to secure a class of large cattle-men, and, since the proposals meant the benefits without the limitations of the Australian system, it was naturally very popular. In a few months, 150,000 hectares were thus taken up in a comparatively restricted land. The result was a boom, and, as with every boom, a collapse. The rate of development had been

forced. Little land was left for the smaller settlers, and so the farmers became discouraged. The new herds, too, stamped out the cultivated plots of the natives, incidentally providing one of the causes of the revolt in 1878. Moreover, the cattle-market was over-supplied, the result being that herds were sold for 40 ~~and~~ even 30 francs a head. The cattle-men thus dwindled, and the smaller families, their enemies though they were, followed them: they could not survive in the face of the droughts, the inadequate lands, and the exorbitant interest-rates. As a result of these accumulated misfortunes, there were fewer settlers than officials in the New Caledonia of 1876,—3,032 functionaries to 2,753 colonists!<sup>21</sup>

As the drift continued, the Government turned, both by force and inclination, to convict-settlement on a large scale. A Commission of 1883 found that free families cost £115 each to install, and, since the first cost of convicts was far less than this, the latter were favoured. A decree of the next year therefore reserved all of the best land for convict settlers. This was the last step: it made New Caledonia "a colony without colonists," and the number of real farmers in 1891 was below a thousand. But, as has been seen, the convicts failed to become settlers, and, by the close of the century, the administration was confronted with a growing bill for its penal system and a dwindling primary production. The confusion was accentuated by the fluctuating policies of Paris at this time. "Ministerial dispatches followed in rapid succession, contradicting each other, and generally adding to the colony's troubles." The position was intrinsically bad. Paris was making it worse, the culmination coming in 1892, when the alienation of land was practically stopped, the result not unnaturally being to precipitate the colony into a crisis.

At this stage, Governor Feillet (1894–1902) formulated his policy,—a policy which enabled New Caledonia to survive the decade following the abolition of transportation.<sup>22</sup> Feillet urged that colonization, to be worthy of the name, had to be the spontaneous settlement of free men,— "a solid and vigorous rural democracy," to use his own phrase. Supported at home by the powerful "French Colonial Union" and its organ, *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, he proposed to bring out a nucleus of 500 families of settlers, much on the Algerian model. This time, there were to be no haphazard methods. The settlers were to be methodically chosen (surely, if so many thousands a year went to La Plata, 500 could go to New Caledonia): once there, they were not to be dumped down on unsuitable land

<sup>21</sup> Alberti (1909), *op. cit.*, p. 207; H. Russier, *Le Partage de l'Océanie* (1905), pp. 224, 225; Délégnon, *Les Aliénations des Terres et la Colonisation Libre en Nouvelle Calédonie* (1898), pp. 29, 109.

<sup>22</sup> Délégnon (1898), *op. cit.*, pp. 110, 147; Dubois et Terrier (1902), *op. cit.*, p. 1020.

and abandoned, as they had been in the past. The administration, far from leaving them to their own devices, was to aid them, without falling into the Algerian error of pampering them and depriving them of a healthy initiative: it was to smooth away the insurmountable difficulties, and the colonists were to reciprocate by providing the necessary vigour.<sup>33</sup>

Within seven years, 525 families were settled as a result of this policy, but, this much achieved, the scheme was "brutally interrupted" by the quite unjustified recall of its initiator. It is true that the struggle was long and pronounced, that labour and communications were lacking, that the long commercial crisis after 1902 precipitated many failures, and that a large number of the colonists became grog-sellers to the convicts and natives.<sup>34</sup> But Feillet claimed that worse than any of these obstacles was the lack of supervision on the part of the Parisian authorities. The majority of the settlers were woefully incapable of surviving the trials of a pioneer's existence. At Houailou, for instance, their numbers included painter-decorators and consumptives! He might have added, too, the insufficient support afforded by the Parisian authorities financially.

After much hesitation in previous years, the Ministry, impressed, it is said, by a growing sense of the feebleness of the whole Feillet project, finally suppressed the annual grant of 70,000 francs in 1908. This ended the scheme and, at the time, coinciding as it did with a mining crisis, was thought to be the death-blow of New Caledonia. The convicts had stopped, the mines were not paying, and now free settlement was to end! How needless it all was, and how those who introduce legitimate reforms in the French world have to pay for their audacity, may be seen from the fact that, of Feillet's 525 settlers, no fewer than 300 remained on the land in 1912!<sup>35</sup> The episode reminds one of the earlier Governor Oly, who was so reprimanded by the Minister for the time being for his praiseworthy aid to sufferers from cyclones that he forwarded a cheque on his private account for the whole amount he had disbursed! Such a relief was denied Feillet, who simply had to submit to recall: he was the author of one of the most promising settlement-schemes the French Empire ever had,—his only reward was disgrace and oblivion.

Since the Feillet scheme, agricultural efforts in New Caledonia, despite the suitability of the land, have been limited. A decree of July, 1913, which remains the basis of land-legislation, allowed free grants

<sup>33</sup> M. le Goupils, *Une Type de Colonisation Administrative: la crise coloniale en Nouvelle Calédonie* (1905), pp. 7-11. Compare Feillet in *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, 25/8/99, p. 513. For the Bazin Report on the loan, see 10/4/99.

<sup>34</sup> *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, 25/1/06.

<sup>35</sup> *L'Océanie Française*, April 1913; Albert (1909), *op. cit.*, pp. 217-219.

up to 200 hectares to all immigrants, and even officials, on condition that they resided on their blocks for five years and improved them: but the result has been mediocre.<sup>36</sup> The emphasis on mining, the gravity of the long chain of commercial crises, and the insufficient public-works combined to bring about this result, and settlement clearly languished. The good land in the island is very scattered and, under the conditions, is practically useless unless sufficient communications are provided and unless the produce may be easily evacuated to a market. Yet, after over sixty years, the colony has only 200 kilometres of road, and it is estimated that 750 kilometres, costing half a million pounds, are at once needed. A railway from Nouméa to Bourail was needed to drain the produce of the scattered west-coast settlements to the capital, yet it was not finished until 1914, and then only after interminable disputes and the raising of three loans.<sup>37</sup> Add to these obstacles the official vacillations, the isolation of the land, the uncertain nature of the climate, and the scarcity of capital; and the backwardness of settlement there may be explained, even if it cannot so easily be justified.<sup>38</sup>

The retarded development of agriculture was in no small measure due to the emphasis on mining. The island is undoubtedly immensely rich in minerals. Gold, copper, and especially nickel were produced in the seventies, but most attention focused on the last after 1875. Nickel is found practically everywhere in the island, and, up to the commencement of Canadian competition, New Caledonia controlled the world-market for this metal. Its discovery saved the colony and enabled it to have whatever prosperity was realized, even after the uneven competition made the Canadian output four times that of New Caledonia. More than half the colony's exports are still of nickel and chrome-ore, and present development centres almost entirely on the hydro-electric works and blast-furnaces built around this metal production.<sup>39</sup> As a result of the basic mining and the correlated industrial activities, the export trade of the island has increased from an average of 9½ million francs in the period between 1905 and 1910 to over 33 million francs since 1920,—an improvement not entirely due to currency depreciation and one which seems to be permanent.

The colony is hampered, on the other hand, by many restrictions. Its isolation from France in particular, as the experience of the War demonstrated, makes its economic life one continued uncertainty. During

<sup>36</sup> *Journal Officiel de la Nouvelle Calédonie*, 1/5/13.

<sup>37</sup> Guieysse in *La Grande Revue*, 10/12/08, for opposition.

<sup>38</sup> For the position from an economic point of view see M. Lang, *La Nouvelle Calédonie* (1925), p. 47 et seq.

<sup>39</sup> *L'Océanie Française*, May 1924.

and after the War-years, the breakdown of French shipping forced New Caledonia to trade with foreigners, despite the exchange difficulty. At the same time, the War paralysed the chrome and nickel markets, reducing prices by a third and a half respectively. As a result, the budget-reserves dwindled, the credit-balances disappeared altogether, and, especially after 1920, the island finances were threatened with crisis. France had to advance over ten million francs in the ensuing four years, still without reaching equilibrium. An additional loan of five millions was therefore proposed to pay off the deficit and to allow the island to make a fresh start with its public-works. In consequence of this outside aid, the group's finances began to retrieve themselves, especially from 1923 onwards, when the metal outlook improved.<sup>40</sup>

There New Caledonia rests at present,—a rich land with the problem of the natives solved by driving them back, agriculture possible but very retarded, and a flourishing mineral industry that is the colony's backbone. The convicts linger on as a testimony to the failures of the past, and the debased natives passively demand a more liberal policy: but the eyes of the French are on the nickel-seams in the hills and the blast-furnaces that appear so out of place in a land of coconut-palms; and beside these, other problems, other duties, have to assume second place. Though hindered by its acute labour-problem and by its isolation from the rest of the French world, New Caledonia is at present successful, possibly because, like Indo-China, it is in certain ways an intrinsically rich land. Certainly, it has a far larger proportion of European residents than any other French colony, and, despite the gravity and duration of the post-war crisis, a sounder outlook than most, especially now that Indo-Chinese labour is coming in in such great quantities. But, however this may be, and however optimistic the present view-point, the history of New Caledonia, like that of the majority of French colonies, is mainly one of failures,—of unsuccessful experiments. In particular, the shrinking, backward natives cry aloud the breakdown of French civilizing efforts there: French politicians and theorists may speak of the sacred duties of a colonizing Power, but conditions in the native reserves of this South Sea group give the lie to their statements and pretensions. And that fact, after all, is more significant than the nickel-gashes in the hill-sides or the belching blast-furnaces. Yet New Caledonia is indisputably one of the *successful* French colonies,—a good commentary on the general nature of French colonial efforts.

<sup>40</sup> For the successive stages of the crisis, see *L'Océanie Française*, March 1920; March-April 1921, and Jan. 1924.

### III. The New Hebrides

The most interesting of the French spheres of influence in the Pacific is undoubtedly the group of the New Hebrides,—a rich scattered line of islands lying to the north of New Caledonia and at present jointly administered by France and Great Britain under a Condominium. This group has always been the centre of Anglo-French rivalries in the Pacific and provided a problem that was interesting from many points of view.

The story goes back to an early stage in Melanesian history. Early in the period of non-annexation, agents of the London Missionary Society went to the group (1839), soon to be followed by the sandalwood-traders. Certain freelances, like Paddon, the Scotsman who was the moving spirit of the economic life of New Caledonia, and even the Godeffroys, the great German combine that dominated Pacific commerce from the Line Islands to Tongatabu, traded there in the fifties: but the effort remained spasmodic until the beginning of what is known in local annals as "the Higginson cycle." John Higginson, a Bedfordshireman who had become a naturalized Frenchman and a partner of the Rothschilds, formed the "Caledonian Company of the New Hebrides" (1882) and planned to settle the group with *récoltivistes* from New Caledonia.<sup>41</sup> The merchants of Nouméa, foreseeing the economic attachment of the new group to theirs, subscribed half a million francs of capital in twenty-four hours, and, by the close of 1882, the Company had bought 150,000 acres of land from the natives, with a pre-emptive right over an additional 200,000 acres. Three years later, the area so acquired had swollen to 700,000 acres, and the Company was the only energetic force in the life of the group.

At this stage, the question was suddenly flung into wider diplomatic channels. The Australian colonies, alarmed by the forward economic policy of New Caledonia and by the menace of a new convict colony, and not a little vexed because Higginson's astuteness had forestalled an Anglo-Australian Company in Malekula, protested to Great Britain. Higginson had placed the chiefs of Malekula "under the protection of the French," and the New Caledonian administration, while disavowing any intention of a forward policy, had constructed a line of military posts there in 1886. The Australians saw in these moves an exact duplicate of the methods the English had themselves pursued in Fiji a decade earlier, and thought to counter the French triumph by invoking the aid of diplomacy. "Beaten on the field of the commercial and patriotic war," quite rightly summed

<sup>41</sup> H. Russier, *Le Partage de l'Océanie* (1905), pp. 192-193; P. Deschanel, *Les Intérêts Français dans l'Océan Pacifique* (1888), p. 245.

up a French authority, "the Australians then turned all their efforts to the diplomatic struggle."<sup>42</sup>

This opened a new stage. At that time, with Samoa in the world's spotlight for the moment, Pacific matters were always embryonic causes of world-crises, and there was no mistaking the gravity with which both France and England regarded the problem. The issue was really postponed by a Convention of October 24, 1887, which established a Joint Commission of Naval Officers in the New Hebrides. Their duties were to maintain order, but, beyond asserting that neither side was to act independently of the other, the Convention made no attempt to solve the many troublesome questions that were bound to emerge under so vague a system of control. As a matter of fact, the Naval Commission was never useful, and, amounting to a sanction of *laissez-faire* it did, became increasingly out of touch with the realities of the situation as the century came to a close.

In the interim, the English had been consolidating their position, largely because the Australian colonies, inspired by the somewhat noisy and certainly secular agitation of the Presbyterian missionaries, and not at all reluctant to have a cause which would justify them in keeping the Colonial Office up to the mark, would not let the matter drop. A Consul was installed at Port Vila in 1880, but, owing to French protests, was withdrawn two years later, though the English clearly had international law on their side in this particular case. Then the Foreign Jurisdiction Act of 1890 and the Pacific Order-in-Council of 1893 increased England's powers in such groups as the New Hebrides, and meant that the English nationals there received effective protection and a national court, whereas the French were neglected by their Government. Every French colonial effort in this decade centred on Africa, and at this stage, just before the Marchand episode, France desired no trouble, such as had occurred in 1883-1886. The Government even annulled a municipality which the French settlers formed in the group, as contrary to the agreement of 1887, and in general comported themselves with studious fairness, or, as the irate colonists declared, abandoned their interests there for larger ones elsewhere.

Not until 1900—that is, until the African horizon had cleared—did the French move, but then they acted decisively. In February, 1901, they organized administrative and judicial structures in the group, and set up a Resident-Commissioner under the Governor of New Caledonia. Though decisive in practice, this action was still moderate in law. The French were now turning the English juridical argument against them-

<sup>42</sup> Politis in *Revue générale de droit international public* (1901), pp. 121, 230 et seq. Compare his 1908 monograph.

selves, because, while the Order-in-Council of 1893 applied to foreigners as well as to Englishmen, the French pointed out that their actions of 1901 applied *only* to their own nationals and therefore could not be opposed. But, to all intents and purposes, the move meant that the French had obtained governmental supremacy in the group, and it has to be remembered that they already had economic predominance there.

Perceiving this, the English suddenly evoked the position of the natives and the impossibility of deciding land-claims as pretexts for a revision of the situation. Using the *Entente Cordiale* as their lever, they secured the Convention of October, 1906, but only after months of involved and tedious negotiations. In its final form,<sup>43</sup> the Convention set up a "region of joint influence" in the New Hebrides, with each country controlling its own subjects. Each was to have a High Commissioner, a Resident-Commissioner, and a body of police; but certain services, such as public-works and finance, were to be administered in common. At the same time, the old Joint Naval Commission was to remain in existence to help keep order. A Joint Court was instituted, with a Spanish judge, to deal with cases concerning more than one State.<sup>44</sup> In short, the system, ill rounded-off as it was, tried to combine joint administration with the control by each country of its own subjects. A number of elaborate, but not very practical, articles dealt with the natives,—ostensibly to solve those problems that the diplomats thought *should* arise in a native country. No native was allowed to become a French or British subject, lest either of the two parties might unduly strengthen itself by extensive naturalization. The High Commissioners were jointly to make regulations for them, but were to respect their customs. The sale of arms and the liquor-traffic were both forbidden, and general provisions made for settling labour-disputes and land-troubles. But the practical touch was lacking in each instance. The whole agreement reeked of arm-chair theory, the questions that practical administrators would have asked were nowhere considered. No one stopped to ask, how will it work? No one considered the everyday control of the native populations. An equipoise on paper was what the diplomats needed,—a footnote to the *Entente Cordiale*; and then a relegation of the matter to obscurity. Sir Edward Grey and M. Paul Cambon thought to introduce a completely new system of government in an agreement of some sixty-eight short

<sup>43</sup> *Politis in Revue générale de droit international public*, 1904, p. 755, or British Parliamentary Papers, C. 5256 (1887) and Cd. 3300 (1906), for the respective agreements. An analysis is in Brunet, *Le Régime international des Nouvelles Hébrides* (1907), p. 101.

<sup>44</sup> For the Joint Court arrangements, see British Parliamentary Paper, Cd. 3876 (1907), or A. Mérignhac, *Traité de Droit Public International*, Vol. II (1907), p. 365 *et seq.*



articles, and wherever difficulties arose, as in connection with the disposal of the natives, appeared to think that the introduction of the words "joint control" fully met the case!

Closer to realities, however, the Australian colonies and New Zealand once more raised an outcry against what they considered a sacrifice of their interests. No representative of either of these colonies had taken part in the Conference; hence the atmosphere of unreality around the whole Condominium arrangement. The Australians therefore deprecated the manner of its passing, were infuriated with its content, and scorned its proposals for future administration. But the Convention was ratified, despite their protests, as probably Lord Elgin, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, had read the report of High Commissioner in Thurn stating baldly that there were 401 French settlers to 228 British and that, under the circumstances, the British were receiving an adequate share of control!

Since then, the Condominium has only once been amended, otherwise remaining intact. A protocol of August, 1914, provided for representatives of *both* Powers in all islands. Previously, certain districts, like Port Sandwich, had been under the French alone, and others, like Tanna and Santo, under the British: but hereafter, such places were to be administered in common by two officials. This protocol, which was not ratified until March, 1922, did not touch the main machinery of the Condominium, but confined itself to an unimportant detail of administration. Its only other provisions were in arranging for the settlement of native disputes by special native-tribunals and in placing more stringent limits on recruiting,—limits which, since they could not be enforced, affected nobody and thus were readily accepted by all.

In this way, the farce of the Condominium was set up with all the pomp of international diplomacy, and, as was expected, proved impracticable from the commencement. Any dyarchy of this kind demands a careful study of all details in advance, and cannot be introduced by a general Convention dealing only with principles. It is an intricate problem in applied administration, and, however perfect the arrangement may be from a technical point of view, depends, for the slightest measure of success, on the human factors of the situation. In this case, the issue was decided in advance. The arrangement itself was far from perfect and any possibility of its harmonious enforcement was rejected by the attitude of both parties. Such a haphazard compromise would probably not have worked under any conditions: with the tension that was always present in the New Hebrides, it never had an opportunity.

Wherever one approached the problem, the weaknesses of the situation became obvious. Take justice, which, in view of the land disputes, was perhaps the most pressing aspect of all. There, the position resembled

nothing as much as the artificial and impossible dilemmas found in law examination-papers. There was a French tribunal, a British tribunal, a mixed tribunal, a Joint Naval Tribunal, and nobody could say what were the exact functions of each of these. All kept themselves busy, and all judged: whether they overlapped was a different matter, and whether they covered the whole range of litigation was not considered at all. An Australian Inter-State Commission on Pacific Trade (1918), composed of men with long practical experience of island problems, reported that this complexity involved "an endless series of complaints as to the uncertainty of the law, the inertness of the administration, and the tardy dispensation of justice, more especially in the determination of disputed titles."<sup>45</sup>

The absurdity reaches its height in the Joint Court. This tribunal has a Spanish judge, Dutch officials, and proceedings in either English or French or both. It is as efficient as could be imagined under the circumstances. The French belittle it and deride its judicial dignity,<sup>46</sup> and the administrators on the French side do not collect most of the fines imposed. But even were this local feeling and administrative weakness absent, the position would still be impossible. No provision at all is made to bridge the gap between English and French legal conceptions. The basic ideas are in many cases as different as the poles. What happens, for example, when the French insist on the inquisitorial form of trial, or their attitude towards written evidence, or their *droit administratif*? Or, as often happens, how is the dilemma solved when they introduce certain of their land-laws that have no parallel in the English system? The process of *surenchère* (higher bidding) is a case in point, which arose in March, 1913. Again, to take the general concept, "land-suit," the French equivalent of this, *procès foncier*, includes many things not applicable to the English term.<sup>47</sup> Nor are these exaggerated instances. The very basic principles of jurisdiction remain unsettled, and so chimerical is the whole proceeding that the Court appears either to be in vacation or to confine itself to certain insignificant details, a safe way of avoiding troublesome issues. After three years of absence, for instance, the Judge reopened the Mixed Court in June, 1923, and in its first session dealt with such heinous offences as a colonist selling wine to the natives, and one native boy giving wine to his comrades.<sup>48</sup> In addition, it is only fair to state, one major point was settled. Etiquette

<sup>45</sup> Report of Australian Inter-State Commission on Pacific Trade (1918).—For the general drift, see Australian Commonwealth Papers 180 and 213 of 1914–1915 (report of Royal Commission).

<sup>46</sup> *L'Océanie Française*, Feb. 1914, March 1922.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, July 1914.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept.–Oct. 1923.

demanding the presence of police, so a force was organized, national rivalries being carefully considered. The force finally took the form of two Loyalty Islanders for the French, two New Hebrides boys for the English! The Court costs £5,000 a year and does nothing. Its chief duties were to have been in registering land-titles and settling disputes concerning holdings: yet, up to 1922, it had not issued a single judgment consolidating properties in the archipelago! It remains a legal curiosity,—a reflection on the rule of reason in colonial matters.

A more serious phase of the situation is concerned with those questions for which there is no court available; and it is a striking commentary on the situation to note that, with such a superabundance of tribunals, there are still obvious gaps. Until 1917, for instance, there was no effective court in which the natives could settle their disputes. Law-suits between natives, other than those involving real-estate, could only be referred to the mixed tribunal if all the parties agreed, and if the agreement declared that the tribunal would judge according to native custom. But, since Melanesian society is based on a localism and *amorcellement* perhaps unequalled in history, native customs vary beyond the possibility of compromise; and, if no agreement can be reached on this point, then no court is competent. In the interim, the native has probably settled the issue by his own rapid and effective law,—that of the tomahawk!

A similar gap existed for many cases of land and commercial law. It was doubtful which court could decide questions relating to the forced dissolution of an Anglo-French Company, or could judge foreign criminals (and the population of the group is most varied) before they opted for either French or British nationality.<sup>49</sup> Added to this was the laxity of French justice in the case of serious crimes. A French colonist was murdered in 1913, for instance: two of the murderers received sentences of imprisonment for a few months! The judicial arrangements as a whole were far too cumbrous and elaborate, and yet not sufficient in everyday cases. Rarely has there been such a stupid and artificial legal position where a European Government is concerned. It has not a single redeeming feature, as both sides admit. It is ineffective where it should be efficient, is grimly opposed by the English settlers, and quite ignored by the French. Yet it goes on unaltered: and at least, it should be added, its members very tactfully avoid the raising of difficult issues.

A similar position pertains in every other sphere of administration. Government offices are few and underpaid, and the French avowedly refuse to co-operate in any way. The police service is bad, other Government departments practically non-existent. For 80,000 natives, for

<sup>49</sup> Article by Viollette in *L'Océanie Française*, July, 1914.

example, nothing at all had been done before 1911 to prevent depopulation or to diminish disease. In 1916, there were no public-works, except a wireless post at Port Vila. Roads, wharves, and sea-beacons were unknown: and, of a budget of 400,000 francs, the only work provided for was an expenditure of 10,000 francs on the Vaté roads! Economic matters were untouched, and those planters who desired to abuse the labour-regulations could, at least in so far as the French were concerned, do so with impunity.

In short, the Anglo-French Condominium has broken down in every part. It either did nothing and thus allowed drift, or introduced inapplicable measures based on conditions elsewhere. In neither case did the settlers or the natives benefit, and in neither did the Government advance. Both sides admitted the failure. "The administration of the Condominium," wrote Lippmann in an important article in *Colonies et Marine*, "has clearly shown that it can neither assure the economic development of the lands placed under its authority nor guarantee the security of goods and persons without a very long delay."<sup>50</sup> The British went further and said that it satisfied nobody, except perhaps the responsible diplomats.<sup>51</sup> Several colonial bodies, notably Australian Commissions in 1916 and 1918, attacked it root-and-branch, and Massey, the Premier of New Zealand, strongly objected to it at the Imperial Conference of 1921. The trouble was not in finding fault with it, but with settling it in diplomacy. Rightly or wrongly, this specific question was one of the tag-end issues of Anglo-French diplomacy, and the moment it was raised, was obscured by an utterly redundant appeal to national pride. Missionary interests in Australia and colonial "diehards" in France refused to consider any compromise or admit the possibility of quite obvious arguments against their side: and any solution was thus put out of court before it could be postulated or considered.

The facts are abundantly clear, and, if they were not obscured by emotional vapourings or considerations of national pride, would not present an intrinsically difficult problem. Briefly, the position is that the French are in an undisputed and growing preponderance, both economic and numerical, in a group which is obviously a geographical and economic outlier of New Caledonia. In 1924 they had 750 nationals in the group to 274 British, and controlled £278,218 of a total external commerce of £353,219,—a position that is becoming clearer owing to Australia's

<sup>50</sup> Lippmann in *Colonies et Marine*, 1919, p. 356.

<sup>51</sup> To quote instances at random, Fiddes, *The Colonial Office* (1926), p. 208; E. Jacomb, *England and France in the New Hebrides* (1919), Chap. 5 *et seq.*; protests of Australia and New Hebrides in British Parliamentary Paper, Cd. 3288, 1907; Massey's protest at Imperial Conference of 1921.

refusal to aid her colonists there and owing to the successful introduction of Indo-Chinese and Javanese labourers to the French plantations in the last few years. England's claims thus resolve themselves into a 20 per cent. economic interest (and a dwindling one), a geographical argument that is refuted by a glance at the map, and an assertive missionary control.

Yet each of the possible alternatives is opposed. The most obvious one, of giving the group to France and seeking compensation elsewhere, presumably in Africa, is opposed tooth-and-nail by the Australian colonies, for what reason other than the hold of its missionaries there is not clear. The alternative solution of France ceding the group is equally out of the question, quite apart from the overwhelming nature of her interests there. "The souls of our colonists are not in the market for sale," declare the French, and facts count for little before such an argument. Moreover, they declare, with rather more rhetoric than reason, but with at least a fair foundation of fact, a division from New Caledonia is impossible. The two are complements,—the one agricultural, the other mining—"To separate them would be nothing more nor less than cutting one of its limbs from a living being!" The third way out of the dilemma, that of geographical partition of the archipelago, is obviously impossible. The French are in the middle, the British at either end: and, under the conditions, even if a division could be effected, questions of administration and justice and native policy would raise impassable obstacles.

Of these three alternatives, logic clearly points to one only, because, if annexation is to be determined by missionary interests alone, then it would be equally justifiable for the British to demand parts of Korea or, in the Pacific zone, the Loyalties, where a precisely similar position pertains. A step, or at least a tendency, towards the desired direction appeared in 1921 when the Hughes Government in Australia refused to accept the offer of the 750,000 acres held by the Company which had acquired Higginson's interests. As the price involved was only half a million pounds, the estimate placed on New Hebridean affairs by governmental interests in Australia was rather clearly indicated.

The position, therefore, remains unaltered. The French retain and increase their numerical, trading, and social superiority, and are more and more monopolizing the plantations. On the other hand, the Australians have the commercial organization and the more active shipping lines. Over and above this cleavage of interests, the Condominium retards the economic development of the group, neglects native interests, and is an irritant to Anglo-French relations in the Pacific. This child of diplomacy, though perhaps an amusing experiment in international relationships, is an administrative absurdity. It is a completely un-

justifiable arrangement, and, to make the problem more serious, becomes worse with the passage of the years. It may safely be asserted that no other solution would be as bad for any interest (save perhaps that of the missionaries), and that no more inept system of control could be devised : but such strictures have been so often reiterated by even conservative critics on both sides that they have lost their novelty. The Condominium surpasses everything elsewhere in French colonization,—and therein is its ultimate condemnation.

#### IV. The General Policy of France in the Pacific

France's scattered possessions in the Pacific, while not large, were potentially important, especially in an ocean where strategical considerations play so large a part. France had the elements with which to build up a belt of influence across the Pacific, just as Germany had done from the centre of Samoa in Weber's time, fifty years ago. Indo-China, New Caledonia, Tahiti, Panama,—the map beckoned with an irresistible appeal, especially when the Pacific assumed its new-found importance in world-affairs in the twentieth century.

But, whenever any scheme of this kind was mooted, the most obvious facts were the weaknesses of the French position. When the dreamer turned from linking up scattered groups on the map to considering realities, the position was very different. The various French possessions were isolated and, without exception, practically paralysed by internal problems. All of them were weak financially, even New Caledonia with its mineral resources : all had labour-supplies inadequate to maintain even the existing situation : none of them possessed, or could attract, large supplies of capital : all were practically undeveloped, except for New Caledonia's nickel and chrome : and none had an energetic or even consistent policy. As providing the raw materials for a vague imperialistic venture, they were certainly not promising.

During the war-years, however, the very obviousness of these unpalatable facts was a service, for France realized that the revival of her policy in the Pacific was the only alternative to the disappearance of her interests there. The crisis had become so acute that France had to do something because of the very intensity of her despair. Certainly, things could scarcely have been worse, as all of the perennial weaknesses of island-life had become accentuated by the events of the War. The groups were cut off from the outside world, and, from an economic and governmental point of view, simply languished. They had to pay exorbitant prices for the goods they needed and could not dispose of their own products. Copra, vanilla, and pearl-shell—the island staples—all fell in 1914, then for a time boomed, but finally collapsed, the uncertainty

in each case being far worse than the diminished returns. After 1920 in particular, all of the island products fell to a half or a third of their value within two years, the result being the final collapse of State finances everywhere.<sup>52</sup> The isolation of the War and the dislocation of trade had gravely affected the respective Treasuries, the small credit-balances of 1914 had been absorbed, and when the franc began to depreciate, all, even New Caledonia, were faced with the prospect of immediate bankruptcy. That economic prosperity which had been slowly emerging before the War thus received a rude shock, and the islands drifted in a despairing lethargy.<sup>53</sup>

The collapse of the unduly optimistic outlook towards the Panama Canal also worked in the same direction. In 1912 the French had hailed the opening of the Canal as an event that was to galvanize their Pacific colonies into a new existence, that was to give their policy in the ocean a new meaning, and that was, in a word, to make them the arbiters in the life of the South Pacific. Papeete harbour in Tahiti, according to a Commission of 1913, was to become the trade cross-roads of the Pacific, and arrangements were made to spend seven million francs in modernizing it.<sup>54</sup> The French anticipated at least an annual tonnage of 600,000 there, and hoped that New Caledonia, across the ocean, would also be retrieved from its isolation. Accordingly, the law to carry out this scheme was passed in April, 1914, absolutely without discussion.<sup>55</sup> But the War came, nothing happened to Papeete (beyond a very thorough German bombardment), and the Panama anticipations were far from being realized.

Equally pessimistic was the governmental outlook. The islands appeared to be veritable administrative graveyards. Tahiti, with its thirty-one Governors in forty years, was a monument of inefficiency and retarded development: the Marquesas was a charnel-house of a few thousand despairing natives: New Caledonia, confronted by the financial crisis after the end of transportation and the failure to support Feillet's policy of free settlement, was wavering: and the New Hebrides, despite the virility of French economic interests there, was hampered by the Condominium form of administration. The great colonial house-cleaning of the years after the War therefore found very dirty corners in the French domain in the Pacific. A few isolated lifeless colonies seemed to sum up the position, and, if there were large possibilities, these remained only in theory. On the other hand, France had the nucleus of a strong position

<sup>52</sup> *L'Océanie Française*, Jan. 1924.

<sup>53</sup> For position, see Regelsperger et Pelleray, *L'Océanie Française*, 1922, for each group.

<sup>54</sup> *Journal Officiel des Etablissements françaises de l'Océanie*, 19/5/13—two official reports.

<sup>55</sup> *Journal Officiel* (Paris), 4/3/14.

there : the Tahitian group, despite its administrative anæmia, had been slowly prospering before the War ; New Caledonia had its minerals and its large European population ; and the French position in New Hebridean settlement was improving. The elements for advance were clearly there, however abused they may have been in the past, and however hidden they were at the moment by the veil of pessimism that had cast itself over island affairs.

But these elements were useless unless France could make them productive by bringing in labour and capital in sufficient quantities. This was easier said than done, however, because where was a country faced by the post-war economic crisis, by the depreciation of the franc, and by the growing demands of the African Empire to find men or money for her fragmentary possessions at the Antipodes ? At the best, the investment would be but a hazard, judging by past experiences ; and the country was naturally averse to wasting its resources. But here a new element entered. France itself could clearly not sponsor Pacific development, even if she so wished ; but there was a newer France, " France in Asia," that might perchance fill this rôle.

That Indo-China was in a position to do this, if she wished to, was undoubted. The federation was in such an advantageous position that it could easily become the centre of a new French Imperialism in the Eastern hemisphere. It had made wonderful progress since 1905 and was developing in all directions. It was the richest of all the French colonies except North Africa, had a population of 18 millions concentrated in a small area, and an external commerce of 2,300 million francs (1920). Its Treasury reserves were 200 million francs, and there was so much money idle in the country that a local loan was many times over-subscribed. Moreover, in parts, especially the Tonkinese delta, Indo-China was over-populated, so much so that one authority asserted that 40,000 trained men were at the moment available for labour in other colonies. That is, Indo-China had both the men and the money of which the Pacific colonies stood in so great a need.<sup>56</sup>

Why not, therefore, urged the reformers of the Sarraut and Hubert schools, join these two sets of factors for the improvement of both ? What was to prevent the surplus in the one going to fill the gap in the other ? In the Pacific, France had only 80,000 lazy New Hebrideans, most of whom were unaccustomed to the shackles of settled life ; 28,000 New Caledonians who sullenly refused to work ; 1,500 Marquesans who were merely living dead ; and 20,000 Tahitians who had the name of being regular Cythereans, artists of laziness. True, there were the Chinese immigrants, but France wished to keep development in her

<sup>56</sup> Froidevaux in *L'Asie Française*, April 1923.



own hands, although she obviously could not do so without labour. Without this, New Caledonia's nickel and cobalt, and the plantations of Tahiti and the New Hebrides would be mere paper-assets. Capital was a difficult problem, but labour a matter of life or death.

To remedy this fault, and to connect Indo-China's strength with the Pacific's weakness, the reformers formulated their scheme for "*une entr'aide coloniale*," which was to transform France's position in the ocean. The scheme was first mooted by the *Comité de l'Océanie Française* in 1921, adopted by the budget-reporter, Léon Archimbaud, in the same year, and, a little later, officially supported by Albert Sarraut, the Minister for the Colonies.<sup>57</sup> As a symbol of the new connection, M. Rivet, the head of the Civil Service in Indo-China, was appointed Governor of Tahiti, with the special understanding that he was to further the policy. Then, the plan was submitted to the Deputies, and, after a long delay due to local truculence, approved by the Government-Council of Indo-China in December, 1923. After that date, the plan to revive the French groups in the Pacific by unlimited Asiatic immigration and Indo-Chinese capital was accepted as an integral part of French colonial policy. As Archimbaud summed up the position, the aims were—

"To give the Governor-General of Indo-China the necessary powers for establishing and maintaining a French policy in the Pacific that would safeguard our interests and rights, and in addition, to give Indo-China a right of moral, and in certain cases, material tutelage over our Oceanic possessions in order to put a close to the almost complete neglect which distance from the metropolis has meant for them."<sup>58</sup>

In practice, the policy of an *entr'aide* meant Asiatic immigration. This, however, was far from being an entirely new feature in island-life. France had already tried Javanese and Indo-Chinese and Indian coolies in the early years of the century in New Caledonia; but the difficulties of selection and the undue expense of the system had led to its abandonment. Moreover, there was no central power of direction to keep it going, and, after the financial crisis of 1903–1906, the experiment simply died of inanition. The newer venture, however, was on a far different plane: it had Governmental direction, and scope, and continuity, and in every way, a fundamental place in island-life.

The first Tonkinese under its ægis went to New Caledonia in August, 1920, to the New Hebrides early in 1923, and to Tahiti two years later. So successful were they that 5,300 Asiatics, including Javanese, had been

<sup>57</sup> See *Dépêche Coloniale et Maritime*, 10/8/22, or *La Mise en Valeur des Colonies Françaises* (1923), p. 73 et seq.

<sup>58</sup> *L'Océanie Française*, Dec. 1922; Nov.–Dec. 1923; and June–July 1924. An account is in S. H. Roberts, *Population Problems of the Pacific* (1927), p. 287.

landed in the western groups by the end of 1924, and the demand for them was constantly increasing.<sup>59</sup> They have provided labour for the mineral revival in New Caledonia and have allowed the French planters in the New Hebrides to forge ahead of their English rivals. Commissions of inquiry from Indo-China have professed themselves satisfied with the conditions under which the immigrants find themselves, and Indo-China has largely overcome its initial aversion to the scheme. In short, the predictions of the reformers have fully justified themselves, and the French are rapidly aiding that Orientalization which is taking place in all Pacific lands.

At the same time, new steamship lines have connected Saigon and New Caledonia, and even Tahiti, thus linking the island groups together and effecting what was termed "a veritable economic revolution." Indo-China also financed immigration schemes from Java and advanced loans to Tahiti to carry out the old Papeete port project, as a forerunner of her duties of economic guardianship. To cement the structure, a "High Commissioner-ship of the Pacific," a concentration of local units on the lines advocated by de Lanessan forty years ago, was mooted. Hanoi was then to gather together all of the strands of French policy in the Orient and the Pacific, and thus secure that uniformity and continuity that had been impossible under the old localist *régimes*.

Against the success of the new policy, however, certain forces are operating. The projected unity is largely artificial, because Saigon and Nouméa are 4,700 miles apart, and Nouméa is still 2,500 miles from Tahiti. Moreover, each falls within a different economic world. Indo-China is an appendage of China, while New Caledonia naturally turns to Australia, tariff difficulties notwithstanding, and Tahiti to America. That was why the movement for a single Government-General of the Pacific failed before the War, and why any uniform Pacific policy has hitherto proved impossible. Add to these factors the still scantily veiled reluctance of the Indo-Chinese Government to further the scheme—in fact, any scheme ready-made for them by the metropolis,—and the difficulties of the situation will be readily manifest. Whether these factors will triumph in the end, or whether the French will continue to introduce 5,000 Asiatics to their island-groups every year and thus metamorphose their economic position there, remains to be seen.

Up to the present, while the economic side of the project has been successful, it cannot be said that the Governmental aspects of the plan to secure a uniform French policy in the Pacific have had much effect. The scheme as a whole may mean much and may indissolubly link Indo-

<sup>59</sup> *L'Océanie Française*, Jan.-Feb. 1925, for results. The rules are in *Journal Officiel des Etablissements françaises de l'Océanie*, 1/4/24.

China and all of France's interests in the Pacific zone : it will probably dwindle to a more or less spasmodic introduction of Indo-Chinese labourers, —a trend that is foreshadowed already by the turn to Javanese, with the implication that, after all, the contents of the Indo-Chinese reservoirs are not proving as amenable as could be desired. "*Entr'aide*" remains a fine theory and to date a success : its future is another matter. But it cannot be doubted that the French are making a very active fight to maintain and extend their interests in the Pacific. France realizes that world-affairs are coming to concentrate more and more on the Pacific basin and its fringe-lands, and, her interests in Indo-China, at the very portal of the ocean, being what they are, sees that she cannot over-emphasize the importance of a consistent and aggressive policy there. In Africa, the main part of her task consisted in the formulation of an energetic and, above all, uniform plan for the whole of her interests : precisely the same considerations apply to the regions of French ambitions between Siam and Panama. A spirit of energy and a consistent determination to fight an economic struggle over a long period of time,—both hitherto somewhat rare attributes of French colonization,—have without doubt differentiated this new "*entr'aide*" policy from its predecessors, —and that is the characteristic that makes its possibilities so large.

## CHAPTER XIV

### MOROCCO

#### I. The Struggle to 1912

IT was inevitable that Morocco, the *Maghreb*, Islam's westernmost outpost, should come within the orbit of French colonization. While it did not follow that this was necessitated by the occupation of Algiers in 1830, as certain French imperialists would have us believe, the move west in Oran and the march on the Figig oases placed the question in an entirely new light. It was only after this natural expansion that the issue of the three Mauretanas, as the Tunisia-Morocco scheme was called, became a practical one. Up to that time, the French claim was rather beside the point. A claim for the realization of natural geographical frontiers, unsupported by any effective occupation, was not a very valid one. Moreover, if geography were the deciding factor, as the French implied, then the Atlas should have been the western limit of French North Africa, and what geographical foundation was there for the boundary between Tunisia and Tripolitania? The law of geographical unity was invoked by the French only after the event and as an extra weapon in their armoury: and it was as relevant to the actual conditions as was the argument of the unity of the Mauretanas under the Romans. It is to other explanations that one must look for the source of French policy in Morocco. The move to a natural frontier would perchance explain the onrush as far as the Muluya: but, for the occupation of the west of Morocco (and it was there that the French turned first), quite distinct economic issues and the general rivalries of diplomacy have to be looked to.

This means to say that, apart from the Ujda-Figig sector, which is really a natural prolongation of Algeria, the Moroccan problem was an entity in itself. The elements of that problem could be simply stated. Morocco was the most favoured part of North Africa by nature: it was the richest agriculturally, it had the most forest resources, and it was the least densely peopled. Even in 1921, there were only 5½ million natives. It had an area almost equal to that of France, and was divided into geographical zones so varied as to allow the crops and pastures of Europe as well as tropical products like cotton. Its Tell, or coastal

NOTE THE CONCENTRATION ON THE PLAINS.

 UNDER 1 PERSON PER SQ. KILOMETER.

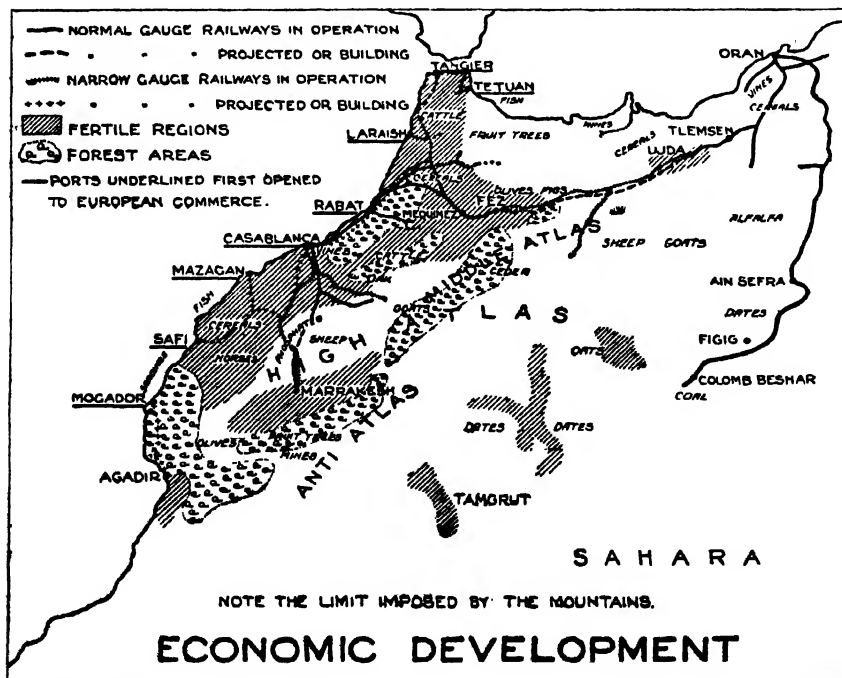
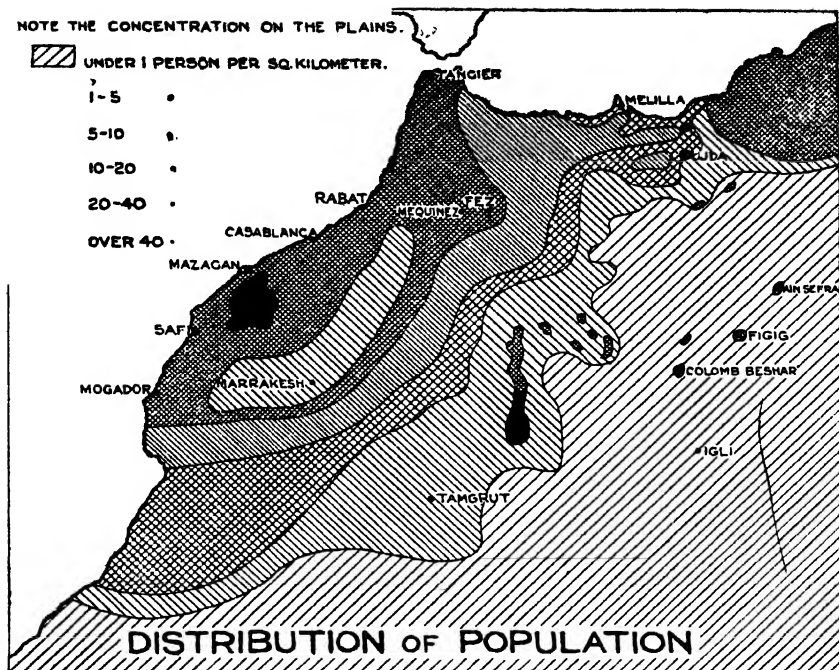
1-5

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OVER 40



plain, was larger than that of Algeria, and seemed an inexhaustible reservoir of agricultural supplies. It was a land of well-developed towns, especially in the middle steppes going up to the Atlas, and, to make the prospect still more inviting to the outsider, there was perpetual local rivalry between the various towns,—between Fez and Marrakesh, and between Casablanca and Rabat and Mazagan. But all alike, rival towns and rival country districts, wanted European goods and offered a virgin market. Trade, industry, agriculture, and even the alluring will-o'-the-wisp of subsoil riches,—all were there for the taking, a rich prize at any time, but doubly so at the end of the nineteenth century, when the partition of Africa had proceeded so far that only desert lands remained. The trade and agriculture of Morocco were very piquant attractions to a Europe confronted by a growing problem of markets in the new protectionist era, and by an increasing difficulty of securing cereals. Morocco was a safety-valve of considerable importance to the industrialists of whatever European country might secure predominance there: and it was equally a source of food-supplies. The economic *motif* for the Moroccan scramble was thus clear, and it was the more attractive because of its somewhat nebulous and uncertain nature.

Nor were actual pretexts for intervention difficult to find. The land was in a chaos politically,—an anomaly in the Mediterranean. It was a sixteenth-century Moslem State, isolated from the world of Islam, vegetating in its isolation, and unmoved by modern progress. Observers like Pierre Loti might rhapsodize about its immobility and romantic charm, but beneath the surface there was very little romance, less efficiency, and no adaptability. Indeed, there was no "Morocco": this was simply a generic term, chosen for its convenience to designate a multitude of contradictions, a confused medley which knew neither organization nor spontaneity. Just as the term "Morocco" was only a geographical expression, so was it only a diplomatic fiction. The land was not a State, so much as an incoherent jumble of constantly shifting peoples, bound only by a nominal spiritual submission to one man. "It was a mosaic of Moslem peoples and tribes, of Arab and Berber languages, of whom some obeyed a central power, and thus presented a certain cohesion, while the rest were more or less completely free from this power."<sup>1</sup> Theoretically, the Alaouite Sultans were at once the spiritual and temporal heads of the Empire, but in practice they exercised sovereignty over only a quarter of Morocco,—that part of the west known as the *Blad el Makhzen*, which included the ports and the big towns of the plain. Beyond that was the *Blad Siba*, the so-called rebel portion,

<sup>1</sup> Lyautey, *Rapport Général sur la Situation du Protectorat du Maroc au 31 juillet, 1914* (1916), p. 49,—the fundamental source.

most of which never submitted. True, there was a certain frontier area which temporarily gave in to a strong Sultan, but even here there was a continual flux, while, beyond this, the rebel tribes exercised an undisputed hegemony. Everything was chronically instable. Even in the coastal plain, the Sultans kept their power only by fomenting rivalries between the tribes. As a result of this weakness, Casablanca and Fez, and sometime Marrakesh, limited the average Sultan's authority,—a position which was clearly intolerable to any outside Power having relations with Morocco. How could France, for instance, demand redress from the Sultan if the Ujda tribes despoiled the desert caravans when the Sultan had as little control over those tribesmen as he had over the nomads of Onomotopa?

Even within the nominally organized zone, there was still uncertainty. Some part of the country was invariably given over to anarchy or rebellion: travellers going from Fez to Marrakesh always had to go *via* Rabat, and it was never possible to travel more than 30 miles a day. Life was of little value, especially a foreigner's; and trade and commerce were almost impossible in the interior. Even in the eight treaty-ports opened to commerce, life was sufficiently uncertain to prevent monotony. Anarchy, corruption, and impotence were the key-notes of this pre-French Morocco, and the entire structure, rotten to the core, was a disgrace to civilization. As the British Minister, Sir John Drummond Hay, described it, Morocco was "a kingdom of fishes of prey: one wherein the biggest of all lives by devouring the next biggest, those in turn the smaller, and so on down to the minnows feeding on the almost inanimate larvæ."<sup>2</sup> The land was a fœtid marsh rather than the mystic outpost of mediæval Islam that Loti imagined.<sup>3</sup>

The drift had been accentuated since 1894. Up to then, Moulay Hassan had kept order. He was the last strong ruler, and had even conquered the Atlas and part of the desert. But his military prowess and organizing ability served only to emphasize the collapse after his death. His son, Moulay Abdul Aziz, was an easily amused weakling, absorbed in the outward frills of civilization, but letting power slip from his hands: and the next Sultan, Moulay Hafid, was a neurasthenic who was a prey of cupidity and xenophobia. Under him (1908-1912) the land lost its last vestige of orderly government and sloughed into anarchy pure and simple.<sup>4</sup> These last two rulers rendered foreign control inevit-

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by McLeod in *Geographical Journal* (London), 1918, p. 85.

<sup>3</sup> A good account of pre-French organization is in Tardieu's report, *Compte Rendu des Travaux du Congrès de l'Afrique du Nord*, 1909, Vol. II, p. 651, or E. Aubin, *Le Maroc d'aujourd'hui* (1904).

<sup>4</sup> *Livre Jaune, Affaires du Maroc*, Vol. I, 1901-1905 (1905), *passim*.

able, and the question now was not so much whether Morocco should be independent, as what Power should assume control? Or, even more important, what economic compensations were the rival Powers to receive?

Here, France asserted her claims. Her trading rights were supposed to go back to the Middle Ages, but for all practical purposes they arose in the east from the Treaty of Isly (1845) and in the west from the Convention of Madrid (1880). But to minimize them, was the consideration that the former were only border rights and the latter were shared equally by several other Powers: so that, in 1900, France seemed to have no especial claim to Morocco, beyond a right of police intervention amongst the Ujda tribes of the east. Indeed, England had a far greater commercial interest in the land, for, in 1901, her maritime commerce with Morocco amounted to 31 million francs as against France's 24 million.

Seeing this, France introduced a new factor, and insisted that the territorial contiguity of Algeria and Morocco gave France "a special interest" in the land.<sup>5</sup> This explained, or perhaps was explained by, the French move in the early years of this century to the economic penetration of the Ujda Tell and the Figig oases. Once accomplished, this gave rise to the claim that Morocco, at least in the east, was but a geographical and economic prolongation of Oran. The claim was first placed on a diplomatic footing by M. Delcassé, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Waldeck-Rousseau Cabinet, in an important speech in the Senate in July, 1901.<sup>6</sup> This may be taken as the beginning of the French move to Morocco. Delcassé literally claimed that the geographical situation made Eastern Morocco "an *enclave* of our African possessions" and that, in consequence, Morocco had to be modernized. The urgent needs of industrial expansion made this necessary, and, while Delcassé disclaimed any intention of indiscreetly hastening such a development, he made it clear that, once the transformation was decided upon, France expected that it was her aid and experience that would be enlisted. This frank declaration of July, 1901, was doubly important. It cleared the air and definitely demanded for France a priority in Morocco: but it also coupled the two reasons of an economic penetration from the Algerian side and a wider industrial expansion from France. It was a regular *exposé des motifs*. Taking advantage of the border-forays of 1901, Delcassé had thus set the stage: under him, France had commenced a policy of peaceful, but decided, penetration and had become the economic sponsor of an awakening Morocco.

The new relationship soon found expression in the arrangements

<sup>5</sup> Delcassé in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 10/12/01, 24/11/03.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*, *ib.*, Senate, 6/7/01.



regarding the Algerian frontier. A protocol of July, 1901, provided for the establishment of order in the Figig oases, which were thus opened to France and incidentally gave her a closer control on all of the caravan routes which came from the desert, even as far as Lake Chad. The same protocol sanctioned a railway to Beni-Ounif to tap this desert trade at the head. The effect in general was to remove the sixty-years' deadlock in this region and to allow a forward economic policy over the oases and up to the Muluya. An accord of the next year went further, and set up "a mixed zone," so that French and Moroccan authorities could co-operate in the maintenance of peace in this region.<sup>7</sup>

But this joint action was not successful, and, by July, 1903, Delcassé had come to realize the limitations of the eastern approach to Morocco. Therefore, he eagerly grasped the financial straits of the Sultan as a pretext for intervening more and more on the western side of the Atlas. Morocco was rapidly drifting: foreign loans were becoming more and more difficult: the new silver money was depreciating in value; and the tribes refused to obey the fiscal reforms. Hence France changed the direction of her efforts, going, so to speak, from the periphery to the centre, especially when the Anglo-French declaration of April, 1904, gave her a free hand in Morocco in return for a like privilege to England in Egypt.<sup>8</sup> She at once became more insistent on the need for reform in Morocco,—“wishing its prosperity, because our own, and that of our Algeria, depend on it.”

The first move in this direction was in June of the same year, when French banks funded the Moroccan debt by a loan of 62½ million francs. This was guaranteed by the Customs revenue, which was to be collected by French agents. The Moroccan customs thus fell to France, and already, Taillandier, the French Minister at Fez, was speaking of the inevitability of a new police force and a State Bank.<sup>9</sup> Economic penetration was clearly gathering pace, and the general trend in 1904 was unmistakable. In November the Deputies passed an appropriation for humanitarian works in Morocco,<sup>10</sup> and the question was no longer whether the French should go there, but what means they would employ. Despite the exuberance of the colonial party, Delcassé still stood firm for a purely economic penetration, and, in a policy-speech of November 10, 1904, defined the aim as an economic aid to Morocco, and, in return, a utiliza-

<sup>7</sup> Livre Jaune, *Affaires du Maroc*, Vol. I, 1901–1905, pp. 27, 49 *et seq.*

<sup>8</sup> At the same time as the published Lansdowne-Cambon Agreement of 8/4/04 was a *secret* one (not published till 1911), partitioning Morocco between France and Spain. See *Affaires du Maroc*, Vol. I, 1901–1905, p. 134 *et seq.*; article in *Revue Générale du Droit International Public*, 1904, p. 701.

<sup>9</sup> Livre Jaune, *Affaires du Maroc*, Vol. I, 1901–1905, pp. 141 *et seq.*, 179.

<sup>10</sup> *Journal Officiel*, *Déps.*, 27/11/04.

tion of the country's resources. Customs control had already been obtained: for the near future, he envisaged a new police, a French State-Bank, roads from Algeria, and a vigorous port policy. Railways and ports and financial stability,—these were to be the methods of France's economic protectorate over Morocco.<sup>11</sup> Taillandier rapidly carried out his instructions on this topic and, in March, 1905, demanded reforms along these lines.

At this stage, however, a new force entered the situation, rudely shattering France's peaceful penetration. Germany changed her passive hostility to active opposition and demanded the internationalization of Morocco's resources,—a claim that was incompatible with French policy. "It is held that our peaceful penetration cannot be reconciled with respect of the Sultan's full sovereignty," reported Bihaud, the French Ambassador in Berlin, in March, 1905. Both sides stood firm, and in rapid succession came the visit of the German Emperor to Tangier, the consequent refusal of the Sultan to accept the French reforms, the resignation of Delcassé and the implied reversal of his economic policy. Germany insisted on an international conference to settle the matter, and the Conference of Algéciras met in the first four months of 1906.<sup>12</sup>

To guard against a breakdown, certain basic principles were agreed on beforehand and were placed outside the realm of discussion. It was recognized that Morocco had to be independent and that all nations had to have economic equality there. But, at the same time, it was conceded that police and financial reforms were necessary and that, in considering these, France's "particular relations" and "special interest" were to be taken into account.<sup>13</sup>

It is interesting to note how the basis of France's special claims had widened by this time. Rouvier, Delcassé's successor, in an important policy-pronouncement of December, 1905, explained these claims as starting from the fact of the Algerian frontier, as being extended by the French position in Western Morocco, but as being, above all, based on considerations of wider policy.

"The special situation that we occupy in Morocco does not arise from the contiguity of our frontiers: our right has a more general source. It

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<sup>11</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 11/11/04. See long statement by Taillandier in *Livre Jaune, Affaires du Maroc*, Vol. I, 1901-1905, p. 179.

<sup>12</sup> For details of these events, see French *Livre Jaune, Affaires du Maroc*, Vol. I, 1901-1905, p. 196 *et seq.*, or German *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette*, 1871-1914, Vol. XX, Part 1, p. 197 *et seq.* The German point of view is best summed up in Radolin-Rouvier, 24/6/05, in *Livre Jaune*, p. 242, the French in Rouvier's speech in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 11/7/05.

<sup>13</sup> *Die Grosse Politik*, Vol. XX, Part 2, pp. 591-592; *Livre Jaune, op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 306-307.

consists of the fact that France is the great Moslem Power of Northern Africa, that we have to maintain and preserve our authority there over a population of six million natives in contact with 700,000 European colonists, and that the community of languages and religion and race which draws this population to that of Morocco makes it susceptible to all the excitements that may develop in the neighbouring State, either from the absence of a regular government or from the institution of a hostile government."

Therefore, while ceding economic equality to other Powers, and while recognizing the Sultan's independence and integrity, France could not, would not, relinquish her special position in Morocco.<sup>14</sup>

After an especially troubled Conference, the General Act of Algeciras (April 7, 1906) stereotyped these principles and laid down the direction of future reforms. In each of the crucial issues there had to be a compromise. A joint Franco-Spanish harbour-police was to be set up in the eight ports open to European commerce: the State Bank was to be subscribed to by each of the signatory Powers, and, while having its seat in Paris, was not to be an exclusively French institution: and no public works were to go to the profit of particular interests.<sup>15</sup> In a word, while France retained an economic predominance, she was not given a monopoly, for the limitations imposed on her action by the new international *régime* were very real. If she had maintained her contention of "special interest," it was only by placing shackles on the future development of those interests.

This Act was the climax of the first period of French policy in Morocco. Delcassé's policy of a steady economic penetration was hereafter discredited, and still more was the strident demand of certain French papers "to make Morocco a second Tunisia." The check of 1906 was so real as to cause a drift for six years. The forward policy was definitely in the discard. France had to intervene, it is true, but, in every field, her action was curtailed. Economically, the forward policy was paralysed: politically, there was an aversion to Morocco: and militarily, there was as little aggression as possible. It was a period of thwarted action and half-hearted policy. Lacking the optimistic aggressiveness of a Delcassé and with the vitalizing spark of keenness gone from her economic policy, France drifted in Morocco, uncertain of her ends and suspicious of her methods. The State Bank was set up in 1907, a French engineer was placed at the head of the public works, and the port-police

<sup>14</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 17/12/05.

<sup>15</sup> For proceedings in full, see *Livre Jaune, Affaires du Maroc*, Vol. II (1906), p. 5 *et seq.*, or *Die Grosse Politik*, Vol. XX, Part 2 (preludes), and Vol. XXI, Part 1 (the Conference itself). The General Act is in *Livre Jaune*, Vol. II, p. 260. For French estimate of results, see *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 13/4/06 (Bourgeois). The English view-point is in Viscount Grey, *Twenty-five Years* (1925), Vol. I, pp. 74, 104.

were organized; but the international régime beyond this failed, and Morocco sank into an anarchy which grew on itself. Commerce and even security were menaced afresh. The depredations of Raisuli in Tangier became such as could no longer be ignored: the Tafilelt side, abutting on Algeria, was in a state of chronic unrest: all commerce from Algeria was suspended in 1906: and practically the whole of the south and east and north were given over to anarchy. In view of this paralysis, and because French nationals had to be avenged, France was forced to occupy Ujda from the Algerian side and Casablanca from the west in 1907.<sup>16</sup> It is quite clear from the documents available that she did not want to pursue a forward policy in Western Morocco at this time<sup>17</sup>: but she had to go, and, willy-nilly, had to stay. "The preponderant importance of our commercial interests, to-day beyond question, is such that we could not contemplate with indifference the blow which a troubled situation would mean to the economic progress of Morocco," reported Regnault, the Minister-Plenipotentiary in Morocco, in December, 1907<sup>18</sup>: and, because of this, France had to retain the Shawia. The facts of the situation continually demanded a more comprehensive policy and, from the end of 1907, even economic considerations were being merged in wider interests.

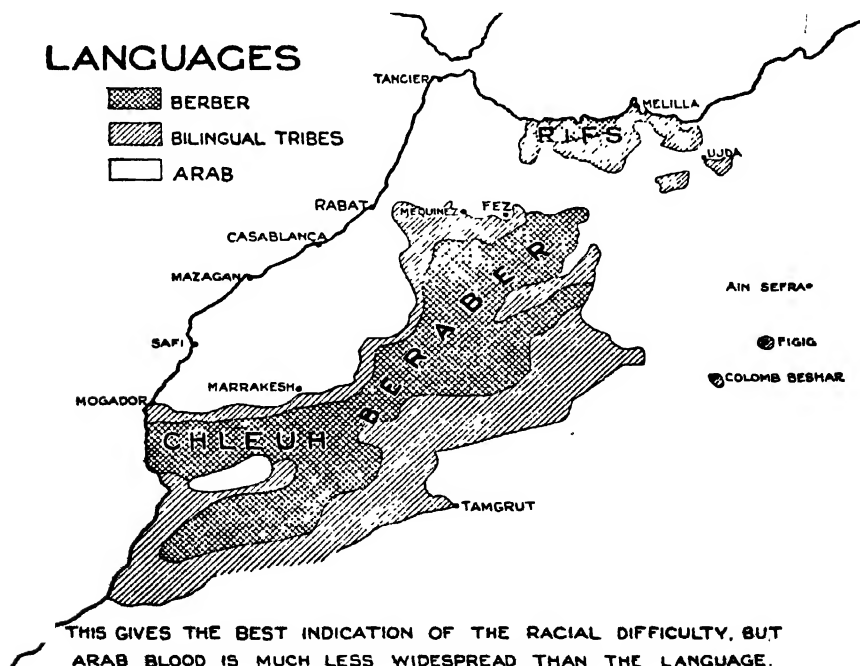
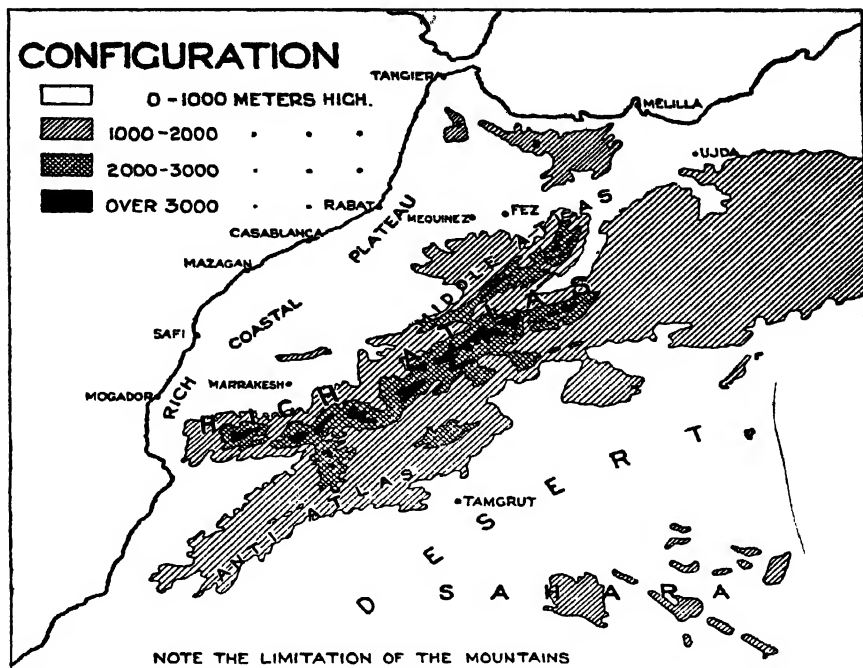
France had gone to Casablanca merely to chastise murderers, but the menace of a civil war again changed the situation. Moulay Hafid proclaimed himself Sultan and intervened in the Shawia, that coastal province where the French had established themselves. As the joint report of Lyautey and Regnault showed in April, 1908, this act again "modified the conditions of the problem by obliging us to penetrate to the interior and exercise an energetic restraint over the tribes." But, even when thus compelled by the logic of facts to interfere, the only goal was to subdue the rich Shawia plain and to hold its outlets by a ring of *kasbahs*.

Then, and for long after, the idea at the back of French minds (and it must be remembered that this was the heyday of colonial indifference in Paris) was to occupy the periphery posts only until native troops could take them over. The Shawia was held by natives (April, 1908), with a reserve, but an ever-diminishing reserve, of Europeans. The French concept was purely negative,—to create native forces to hold the country and to enable France to trade in peace. "We will thus form the skeleton of an organism which we can leave to itself when it offers adequate

<sup>16</sup> Livre Jaune, *Les Affaires du Maroc*, Vol. II, 1906–1907, p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> "Our action in Ujda is not a step towards Fez," wrote M. Pichon, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in March, 1907. *Les Affaires du Maroc*, Vol. III, p. 206.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 35.



guarantees of consistence and stability.”<sup>19</sup> Conquest, as such, was forbidden, and direct rule was out of the question. It is thus quite erroneous to say that France pursued a forward policy in Morocco after Delcassé’s fall, or even after the occupation of the Shawia. To the contrary, from Delcassé’s resignation up to the proclamation of the protectorate, there was an undue waiting on events, despite adequate pretexts for intervention, both in the west and the east. Nor was this the result of the Algeciras restrictions: the truth was that it was the direct expression of the anti-colonial feeling in France in those years. As a result, the modesty of French demands after 1908 was a positive fault,—a sacrifice of facts to the idealistic policy that the Moroccans could be left to themselves and could restore that tranquillity which was necessary for economic development. To buttress an *a priori* theory of withdrawal, the Quai d’Orsay neglected both facts and the views of the man on the spot. Hence the drift, the solution of which became more difficult with the passing of every year.

While the French wavered, Moulay Hafid had scattered his brother’s last *mahalla* and had occupied even the coastal regions. Regnault then negotiated with the new Sultan (August, 1908), and insisted on the French evacuating the outer Shawia, right up to Ber Rechid. He stressed “the provisional character” of the occupation even of the fragment retained. France still believed in the chimera of joint Franco-Moroccan action,<sup>20</sup> although, in 1909, the incongruity of the situation was shown by the mutilation of prisoners of war by the Moroccans, and its impracticability revealed by Moulay Hafid’s attacks on French agricultural *associés*. The Sultan was clearly adopting a more aggressive policy, spurred on, perhaps, by France’s negative attitude. For instance, as late as March, 1910, the French arranged for the complete evacuation of the Shawia as soon as Morocco should have fifteen hundred trained men there.

Indeed, the evacuation of the Tadla had already commenced (November, 1910) when the railway dispute broke out. By that time, pacification had gone far, despite the Sultan’s obstructions, and, beyond the *Blad el Makhzen*, the crop of frontier risings and provincial pretenders was noticeably yielding less. As a corollary of this pacification, French trade was quietly but steadily growing, at the expense of her rivals, as the table shows :—

<sup>19</sup> Report by Regnault and Lyautey in *Les Affaires du Maroc*, Vol. IV, p. 215 *et seq.* See pp. 253–254 for the provisional nature of the occupation.

<sup>20</sup> Livre Jaune, *Les Affaires du Maroc*, Vol. V, 1908–1910, pp. 49, 71, 94 *et seq.*

	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.
			(Millions of Francs.)			
Total commerce. . . .	103	109	97	78	74	76
France and Algeria . . .	32	34	29	30	42	34
England . . . . .	43	45	39	23	24	25
Germany . . . . .	9	10	10	7	7	9

That is, it had increased not only in volume, but from 31 per cent. of the total in 1902 to 56 per cent. in 1906.<sup>21</sup>

Therefore, Germany once more took a hand at the commencement of 1911, and protested that France was contravening the spirit of Algiers by securing an economic preponderance in Morocco. The bone of contention was the railway question, with its corollary of ports. France insisted on linking Casablanca and Fez, and thus making possible a continuous railway-system from Algeria to the Atlantic; while Germany demanded an international railway from Tangier in the north. The French argument was that the diplomatic arrangements of Algiers had not foreseen the economic problems that had emerged, and that the position had completely changed in the interim.<sup>22</sup>

There could be no doubt as to the validity of this last contention. The position had changed beyond doubt in 1911, for the old policy of withdrawal was clearly cracking. The French were no longer content to combine a political *laissez-faire* with a quiet economic penetration. They wanted to strengthen the bonds. In January, 1911, for instance, the *chargé d'affaires* at Tangier had said, "it is absolutely necessary to exercise a vigorous repression in order to put an end to such boundary upheavals as have taken place in the Zaër"; yet it was clear that to go to the Zaër meant to go to Khenifra and that this in turn meant the Atlas foothills. The forests and plains of the Shawia no longer shut in French aims: the broken ridge of the High Atlas was beckoning. So that it is doubtful whether the upheavals at Fez in 1911 were as unwelcome as the French *Livre Jaune* makes out, or as much a pretext as the German *Die Grosse Politik* would imply. Three years before, when Abd el Aziz had been threatened, France stood aloof: now, when Moulay Hafid was menaced by the Berber rising, she resolved to support him to the utmost, her reward to be certain reforms. Clearly, the nature of French policy had changed in the interim. Hence, in April, 1911, a French column was sent to help the Cherifian *harka* relieve Fez.<sup>23</sup>

This march was the *tour de force*. France at once demanded reforms, pleading the financial crisis as a necessity. But at this stage, Germany

<sup>21</sup> *Congrès de l'Afrique du Nord, Compte Rendu*, 1909, Vol. II, p. 655.

<sup>22</sup> *Livre Jaune, Les Affaires du Maroc*, Vol. VI, 1910-1912, p. 33 *et seq.* See p. 105 for German *pro memoria*.

<sup>23</sup> *Livre Jaune, op. cit.*, Vol. VI, 1910-1912, p. 233; *Die Grosse Politik*, Vol. XXIX (1925), p. 71 *et seq.*

once more intervened. She sent a vessel of war to Agadir (July 1, 1911) and thus swept the whole Moroccan question, in its new and vitally changed form, into the vortex of diplomacy.<sup>24</sup> The German claims that the Algeciras arrangements were antiquated and that the integrity of the Sultan was incompatible with the existing position were to a large degree justified, although the method of her protest, especially since Agadir was a closed port, left much to be desired. After protracted negotiations—negotiations impeded by a militant public opinion in each of the countries concerned—the Franco-German Agreement of November 4, 1911, was agreed upon. In essence, this gave France a free hand in Morocco, even to the extent of a protectorate. "You are the masters of Morocco," said Bethmann-Hollweg to Cambon the day it was signed: and France, by ceding an unhealthy and undeveloped part of the Congo, "was left with her prestige intact and freed from the Moroccan thumb-screws."<sup>25</sup>

Decisive action was now possible, and France did not delay. Four months later, Regnault went with a Special Mission to Fez and negotiated the treaty of protectorate (March 30, 1912). This was really a repetition, with a few amendments, of the Treaty of Bardo with Tunisia thirty years before, and provided, in one sweeping clause, for a new *régime*, "allowing such administrative, judicial, educational, economic, financial and military reforms as the French Government may deem necessary." The Sultan was to be protected and maintained, and was to be the mouthpiece of government. The Mohammedan religion and institutions, especially the religious lands (*habous*) always so important in a Moslem country, were to be respected. But, over and above those limitations, France, represented by a Resident-General, was to manage all foreign affairs and to supervise internal administration.<sup>26</sup> As a result, France had a free hand in Morocco, but with the important limitations of previous diplomatic agreements and the difficulties bequeathed by her own irresolute policy since 1905. It was not so much *carte blanche* as an inky paper and a pencil eraser.

<sup>24</sup> For the Agadir episode, see *Livre Jaune*, Vol. VI, 1910-12, p. 386 *et seq.*; *Die Grosse Politik*, Vol. XXIX (1925), p. 37 *et seq.* For England's attitude, see p. 167 or Grey, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 220. The correspondence in the *Livre Jaune*, Vol. VI, pp. 125-255, shows the emergence of Franco-German hostility. For the French view, see the debates in *Journal Officiel*, *Déps.*, 15-21/12/11, 6-11/2/12, or books by A. Tardieu and P. Albin (1912).

<sup>25</sup> For negotiations, see *Die Grosse Politik*, Vol. XXV, Chaps. ccxxx-ccxxxi, or *Livre Jaune*, Vol. VI, p. 632 *et seq.*

<sup>26</sup> Part III of Long's report in *Journal Officiel*, *Déps.*, *docts. parl.*, 1912, No. 1994, or Baudin's report in *Ibid.*, *Senate*, 1912, p. 873. See *L'Afrique Française*, April, 1912, p. 130 *et seq.*



## II. Lyautey's Theory

That was the position in 1912. The Shawia, a rich coastal province with 300,000 people, was effectively occupied: the Fez-Rabat road, though opened in the previous year, was still precariously held: and, on the Algerian side, vigorous movements in the same year had swept up to the Muluya and had opened Debdou market. But, beyond that, everything was difficult. The rebels were "up" everywhere, Fez itself was invested, Moulay Hafid was becoming more xenophobist every day, and French prestige had been gravely weakened by "the excessive reduction of effectives, the absence of an economic plan, and the slowness of decisions." Nor were the least difficulties in Paris, where Jaurès was insisting that "the noble Kabyle democracies" could settle their own affairs! <sup>27</sup>

At this moment of indecision, when the accumulated heritage of the past threatened to wreck the promise of the future, General Paul Lyautey was appointed as the first Resident-General of France in Morocco (May, 1912),—the turning-point in the province's history.<sup>28</sup> Lyautey was a man with a past and a theory. The experience of the one and the execution of the other combined to make him one of the great French colonials, not the least in that list in which Randon and Bugeaud, Paul Bert and Galliéni had preceded him.

Lyautey had served a lifetime in the colonies.<sup>29</sup> He commenced in Algeria and Tonkin, imbued with a deep respect for the ordered plan and rapid execution of British colonial methods. On the road to Tonkin, he summed up his impressions thus, incidentally arriving by a negative process at a realization of the things he desired,—“English power,—unity of plan,—continuity of designs,—governmental stability,—inflexible method, immediate execution,—a practical sense, tenacity, and an essentially elastic adaptation to the country and the climate. In a word, all that we have not.” On the other hand, he noticed that the English method implied an aloofness from the natives and left only a very narrow scope for native co-operation. This seemed to him a fundamental error, because his earlier studies of Mohammedan organization in Algeria had convinced him of the necessity of such co-operation. Conditions in Tonkin confirmed this impression of his, because there he saw for the first time de Lanessan's methods, which were based entirely on a consideration of native susceptibilities. To a realization of what

<sup>27</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 17/6/11, 29/6/12. For French divided opinion, see *Ibid.*, Deps., 15, 22, 29/6/12, 2/7/12.

<sup>28</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, May 1912, pp. 161, 183.

<sup>29</sup> Terrier in *Ibid.*, May 1912, p. 189, or Georges-Gaulis, *La France au Maroc. L'Œuvre du General Lyautey* (1920), p. 40.

the English had and what they lacked, there now came the heritage of Paul Bert and de Lanessan ; and Lyautey's ideas soon crystallized. He translated them into practice by pacifying the mountain-pirates of Upper Tonkin, a task hitherto deemed impossible. After two years of this work, he went to join Galliéni in Madagascar and, from 1900 to 1902, pacified the whole of the south. From here to Ain-Sefra in Southern Algeria and then as warden of the boundary lands between Oran and Morocco for eight years,<sup>30</sup> Lyautey perfected his weapon and obtained a still wider understanding of Moslem psychology. When called to Morocco in May, 1912, therefore, he was no tyro in these matters. He had a lifetime of service behind him and a complete faith in his theory, which had been tested by Tonkinese pirates and Malagasian hillmen and Arab raiders. There was thus no doubt that it was practical and adaptable, and still less that Lyautey could use it.

This theory he had enunciated as early as 1900, when, as a young lieutenant-colonel who had seen service in Tonkin and Madagascar, he published a study on the rôle of the army in the colonies,—a study astonishingly novel in its conceptions.<sup>31</sup> This was at the close of that decade in which French colonization had been dominated by a spirit of unadulterated military conquest, and so was the more revolutionary. According to Lyautey, who had developed the ideas of Bugeaud and Lamoricière and Galliéni in this connection, the army was not so much an instrument of conquest as of organization. "A military occupation consists less in military operations than in a progressive organization." Conquest, that is, is synonymous with organization, both economic and social, so much so that the former cannot proceed without the latter. A conquest of any country, he said, employing the simile of his master Galliéni, is like an oil-stain ("*la tache d'huile*"), absorbing everything in a gradually expanding circle. The military column, if used at all, is only a prelude, and, as such, should be dispensed with as quickly as possible, for it passes and leaves nothing behind it. Really, he went on to say, there should be no such thing as exclusively military operations in a colony, for the very *raison d'être* of every colonial action is economic and social. That is, the army is at once a pacifying and an organizing agency : military and political action go hand in hand : the military and political leaders must be the same : and the troops thrown into a new country must stop there and colonize it. Although this seems a little trite and obvious, and in some ways overdrawn, it certainly meant a new orientation at the time it was uttered and was a definite contri-

<sup>30</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Jan. 1911, p. 7.

<sup>31</sup> *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15/1/1900 : reprinted in *L'Afrique Française*, 1900, pp. 196-225.

bution to colonial theory. Lyautey's first point was thus to insist on joint political and military action. The road of march was no longer to be simply a line of invasion determined by military needs: it was rather to prepare for the *commercial* penetration of the day after the conquest.

This was, and always has been, Lyautey's root-idea,—to pacify and organize simultaneously, instead of consecutively, as had previously been the case. "Civil action and military action proceed with the same alert and certain step," he said, or, in other words, "Military action becomes political, and by this means supple and prudent: and political action acquires the force and prestige of military." The two are the same thing viewed from a different angle, and their utility lies in their convertibility.

But how could this be worked out in practice? Was it not mere jugglery with sentiment to say that the French and the foe were not two rivals, not victor and vanquished, but two associates? And was military defeat any the less galling to a Moslem population because it was called "military-cum-political"? Here Lyautey went into details and promulgated the second part of his plan,—the idea of "markets." Choose the nerve-centres of the country, he argued, the market sites, the trade cross-roads, the economic strategic-points! Let these be occupied and, by the aid of mobile columns, the country is dominated! It is true that there was nothing vitally new in this idea: what was new was the rôle assigned to the forces occupying such posts. After the original column occupied a strategic post near the boundary of several tribes, a market by preference, there would be long *pourparlers*, to accustom the surrounding natives to the idea that their institutions would be safeguarded. The peaceably inclined tribes would be won over by persuasion, the warlike ones by a display of force ("make a display of force to avoid its use") or by a sharp taste of the reality; and all the time, the normal economic life of the tribes would be going on. If anything, it would be spurred to fresh activity by the fillip given to sales by the army of occupation. At the same time, the tribesmen would be made curious and finally gratified by medical or sanitary aid. Buy, sell, cure, cleanse, make roads, bring security,—do all of these from the first! "When surrender has been made, I would have the bayonets sheathed and the doctors pass to the front." "A workshop is worth a battalion," said Lyautey time and again, for, to him, an army was less a fighting machine than an assemblage of doctors and artisans and workers to widen tribal life for the natives.<sup>22</sup>

Herein was what he claimed to be the basis of his policy,—that the

<sup>22</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Sept. 1912, p. 345 (de Castries).

natives should see in the French troops, not destructive fighters so much as tribal organizers who, like the settled tribesmen of the desert themselves, would fight only when necessity demanded it, but who usually, and for preference, organized in peace. "This is the basis of all my doctrines of colonial warfare,—the negation of violent action from the start: it is that which results in the maximum economy of effort and risk and human lives, and that which leaves behind it the least damage when it is time for construction,—construction, which is the *one* aim of every colonial war." It was "a method without great resounding blows, a method of simply going ahead, rather than of assault." It was the method best summed up by its author, one night, facing that Beni-Snassen *massif* the pacification of which was perhaps the finest example of joint political and military effort in French colonial history:—

"I want my posts to give an impression, not of transition, but of permanence. My great preoccupation is to choose for them such sites as will enable commercial life in time of peace to develop round them. The garrisons, by the variety of their needs, will attract first merchants and then settlers. They will protect the economic activity and the markets, which will continually increase around them. My posts must be the hearts of the future centres of colonization." <sup>32</sup>

These, then, were Lyautey's two contributions to colonial action,—that political settlement should proceed *pari passu* with conquest, and that there should be a progressive organization centring on the ordinary economic life of the people to be pacified. Whether these points were essentially new is somewhat irrelevant to the issue, although it is worth noticing that parts of the plan had clearly been foreshadowed by Bugeaud and even its connected form by Galliéni, to whom Lyautey stood in the relation of pupil to master. What distinguished Lyautey was the success with which he converted this theory into practice, and the insistence with which he reiterated its principles. With it, he reversed the dominant colonial theory of the nineties, reared a new school of colonial administrators, and effectively settled Upper Tonkin, South Madagascar, the Algerian marches, and Morocco. After all, it all comes down to the personality of the man who tries to apply it, and his understanding of native psychology. Everything rests on the man in charge,—during the choice of a vantage-post, during the display of overwhelming force and the tempering of this display by negotiation, during the economic development of the centre chosen, and during the spread of the movement as a drop of oil spreads over blotting-paper,—in fact, at every stage. It is clearly a method best suited to the French system which gives its administrators a varied experience, and to the Gallic temperament which

<sup>32</sup> Georges-Gaulis (1920), *op. cit.*, p. 74.

allows a better understanding of native psychology and a closer contact with their ordinary lives. The very aloofness of the colonial policy of other Powers prevents this and, indeed, makes the theory rather meaningless as applied in their colonies. The nearest approach to it would perhaps be in combining the political and military services on the north-western frontier in India, and yet, even then, the basic contact with native life would still be missing. The theory remains essentially French.

Thus, it was a method of peaceful co-operation, of mutual understanding, and fundamentally one based on economic and social development. Lyautey elevated these aspects to the forefront of his colonial system, and, in so doing, unified colonial activity as it had never before been in his country, save perhaps in a less explicit form under Galliéni in Madagascar. At the same time, he widened its objectives so as to secure the greatest profit to the conquering power at the same time as disturbing native life as little as possible. That was its essence. It was, above all, a method of economizing effort and securing the maximum results, and could be summed up in the one phrase,—orderly economic development as quickly and as cheaply as possible.

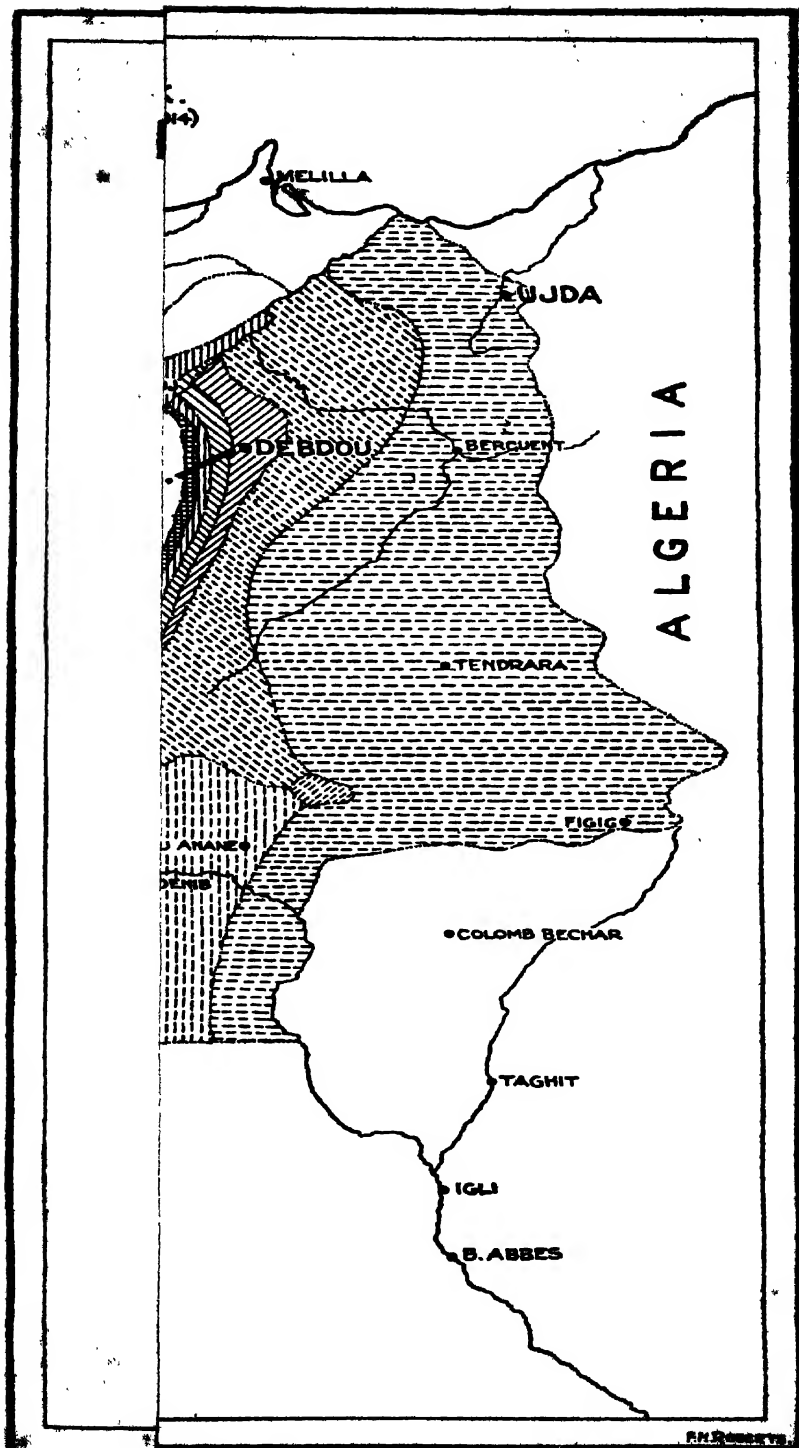
### III. Lyautey in Practice : 1912-1924

#### PACIFICATION

When Lyautey arrived in May, 1912, Morocco was in a critical position.<sup>34</sup> The Shawia and the environs of Rabat were quiet, but the whole region beyond Meknès was a complete gap, as far as control was concerned. The commandant at Meknès could not even greet the Resident-General with a salvo, lest it should provoke an uprising! Beyond that was simply a narrow line of posts, more or less isolated. Fez itself was besieged by rebel tribes, and the dead were still unburied in its streets. Each day saw new desertions, and, in the South, El Hiba's army was growing rapidly. In the occupied area, the Government was either powerless or openly hostile, and Moulay Hafid (who was forced to abdicate in August, 1912) systematically obstructed the French and "sheltered behind the triple barrier of his aversion, his ignorance, and his duplicity."

But it is doubtful if these internal difficulties harassed Lyautey as much as certain external matters. His hands were bound by the earlier treaties, especially those which guaranteed the economic equality of all nations in Morocco and which prevented drastic economic reforms. Even more serious were the divided councils in France, especially when

<sup>34</sup> Lyautey Report, 1916, *op. cit.*, p. 10—report of 10/6/12.





the project of a loan was mooted. This irresolution was worse than the actual revolt, and Lyautey's supporters were justified in crying that "the most formidable *harkas* opposing the progress of France in Morocco are on a row of benches in the extreme left of Parliament."<sup>35</sup> Lyautey was by no means a free agent, and it would be quite erroneous to argue from the list of powers given him in his commission. The position both in France and Morocco seemed to doom him to a policy of half-measures, and he had perforce to limit his objectives.

Indeed, it was the severe limitation of aims and methods that distinguished Morocco from the other colonial ventures of France, even from Madagascar. Both from inclination and necessity, conquest was subordinated to organization. The first year was devoted to quelling the native risings, the second to consolidating the results thus achieved. Offensive action was rigidly limited to the minimum compatible with security, and not till 1914 was there an attempt to secure "a harmonious frontier" from Agadir to Debdou. Lyautey was concerned not so much with a forward movement as with deciding the principles of organization: and these were finally chosen as much by the logic of events as by any preconceived theory.

The mountain-interior was clearly out of the scope of French activity for a long time: it was only the coastal strip that counted. Here there were three regions. The rich province of the Shawia, which had been occupied since 1908, was being conquered by agricultural co-operation and was reasonably safe. Beyond that, in the North, was the region dominated by Fez, and it was here that Lyautey applied his "political-cum-military" method. This was at once the centre of Moslem fanaticism and the road to Algeria; and to Lyautey was the key of the situation.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, he wanted to confine his actions solely to this region and leave untouched those southern parts in which revolt was endemic rather than political. Accordingly, he concentrated on winning over the Moslem leaders of Fez and, securing the loyalty of the people as he went, advancing to the Muluya and thus uniting the two Moroccos. But this was an even more difficult task than he anticipated, and this region for long absorbed the bulk of French activities. In the south, the position was not nearly as difficult, despite Lyautey's initial apprehensions. Even after occupying Marrakesh (1912), he had been dubious if he could stay there, but he was reassured when the natives saw where their interests lay and when the leaders turned away from the pillaging "blue" armies of El Hiba.

<sup>35</sup> In *Dépêche Marocaine*, 22/6/13.

<sup>36</sup> Lyautey Report, 1916, *op. cit.*, introduction, pp. 7, 8. Lyautey reported on this stage of his work to the Commission des Affaires Extérieures in December 1912 (report in full in *L'Afrique Française*, 1912, p. 472).



Irresponsible raiders from the desert found little favour with the traders of Marrakesh or with the feudal *Caïds* of the mountain-tribes ; and these two elements both turned to Lyautey. The occupation of the South thus turned out to be the least of the French tasks, and the ease with which he penetrated here left Lyautey free for the more troublesome North.<sup>37</sup>

By 1914 his policy had come to crystallize in certain directions,—a rapid economic development of the Shawia, neutralizing the South through recognizing the *Grands Caïds*, leaving the Atlas regions untouched, and concentrating on the Fez-Taza sector,—the corridor to Algeria,—in the North. It was the North that caused the trouble, and this was the more irksome because it was so necessary to link the East and the West of Morocco. French activity could not be confined to a mere isolated *enclave* on the Atlantic coast : economic and political reasons alike made a junction with Algeria imperative. The constant menace in the Fez-Taza region simply had to be removed, otherwise French activity in Morocco would be practically vitiated. For this reason, Lyautey concentrated his every activity on effecting this junction, and finally, after every preparation, both military and political, secured the meeting of the eastern and western columns at Taza in May, 1914.<sup>38</sup> Northern Morocco was at last one, but only by a very precarious link. At the same time, the link between Fez and Marrakesh, between North and South, had been secured by smashing the Zaian confederacy, and the " natural limits " which Lyautey had outlined in 1912 were attained.<sup>39</sup> But consolidation was far from complete, and, in particular, the communication between the various centres was weak.

At this moment, at the most crucial stage of consolidation, just when economic measures were being taken to buttress the results achieved by military and political means, the European War broke out. Lyautey had been in sight of success : now, the whole issue was thrown back in the melting-pot. Just when he was about to attack along the whole economic front, his action was paralysed by the international situation : and, more, every gain of the past was threatened.

#### ORGANIZATION

When the West was being occupied by economic measures and the South by political and the North by military means, Lyautey was working

<sup>37</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Sept. 1912, p. 347 *et seq.*, for change of Sultan and events in the South. See Map No. 25.

<sup>38</sup> Lyautey Report, 1916, *op. cit.*, p. 27 *et seq.* ; *L'Afrique Française*, 1914, p. 196 ; 1915, p. 53.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 1914, p. 205 ; 1915, p. 51.

out his general policy of organization. He was sufficiently astute to see how important was the initial decision, and how the first few years would spell either success or failure. In a way, however, his task was easy, for France was no longer a novice in dealing with native races, and, in particular, with Moslem countries. There were the successes and failures of a century to guide him,—the arrant failure of Algeria, the rather lifeless success of Tunisia, the failure of Cochin-China and the success of Tonkin, and, above all, the wonderful success of his master Galliéni in Madagascar. And he himself had had experience in each of these countries and fully understood the difficulties of dealing with a fanatical Mohammedan population.

So that the difficulty with him was not so much in deciding the basic principle of organization as in applying it to the peculiar conditions of Morocco. Tunisia and Tonkin and Madagascar made it clear that any effective development had to be along the lines of a protectorate. The direct rule of Algeria and Cochin-China and the assimilation of the *anciennes colonies* would have been ruinous, unthinkable, in Morocco : and so Lyautey turned to a protectorate,—not, however, to the protectorate as vaguely outlined by de Lanessan forty years ago, but to the protectorate-idea as tempered and defined by the experience of the intervening decades. As he perceived, the idea of a protectorate, by reason of its very vagueness and nebulousness, could be a cloak for many different, and even diametrically opposed, administrations in practice. In the first place, therefore, he set himself to clear up any vagueness as to the general principles, and defined his policy of a protectorate both in itself and in relation to other theories. He was not going to leave any scope for misinterpretations ; and a world of inapplicable, or of variously applicable, theoretical generalizations held little appeal for him. Indeed, so clear was his definition that it is perhaps the best explanation that exists of the protectorate-policy and of the French attitude towards it. He commenced by saying dogmatically that Morocco had to be a protectorate.

"But," he went on to say, "this word, containing as it does a grand and simple colonial doctrine, is most often regarded as an etiquette rather than a truth : one sees in it, if not a mistake, at least a theoretical formula, a formula of transition, destined gradually to disappear. That is the result of most of our colonial experiences. And this sentiment was so strong, in Morocco as elsewhere, that there was scarcely any resistance, and even that only formal, to that move which many thought inevitable, towards direct government, towards an annexation in fact preceding a legal annexation. The War, however, made a change of direction absolutely necessary : and the new experiment, commenced as a matter of prudence, has clearly succeeded. The Protectorate would thus appear, not as a theoretical formula

or a phase of transition, but as a lasting reality :—as the economic and moral penetration of a people, not by subjection to our force or even to our liberties, but by a close association, in which we administer them in peace by their own organs of government and according to their own customs and laws.”<sup>40</sup>

To carry out these principles, Lyautey had to remove the structure of direct rule erected by his predecessors, although this was difficult, because, to the alertly suspicious Mohammedans, any reversal of a policy spelt failure or weakness. His first step was to restore the position of the Sultan, at least outwardly. He revived the ceremonies and grandeur of the court; he scrupulously respected the Sultan's religious authority; and he associated him with various acts. Nor was this a mere gesture. It might be said that the revival of the old scarlet-and-white Black Guard and the other paraphernalia of barbaric pomp was simply an attempt to divert the Sultan's mind from the realities of his position: but there could be no doubt as to the reality of the scope left to the native Government. In his official declarations of policy, “the Resident-General insisted on the absolute necessity, while maintaining direct rule in its entity, of practising, as far as possible, co-operation with the native authorities and the restoration of the Cherifian power.”<sup>41</sup>

This co-operation was not limited to the Sultan, but extended to all branches of administration. The old *Makhzen* became more closely associated with the French and enlarged its powers: the Council of Viziers became “a living institution”: the Council appointed to administer the religious lands (*habous*) was a genuine religious body: and the lesser native officials were all maintained. In essence, the pre-French system of administration, purified and systematized, it is true, went on, and was as genuinely native as ever,—indeed, more so in some respects, because it was now less oligarchic and far more representative.

At the head of the structure was the Sultan, unfettered in his religious capacity as “Prince of the True Believers,” but supervised in his political functions. Beneath him were the Viziers. In the olden days, the five Viziers, with their loosely defined powers, had constituted a kind of Cabinet, but there had been little order and practically no efficiency. Lyautey abolished four of their offices as useless, but maintained the Grand Vizier, who corresponded to the President of the Council and the Minister of the Interior in France. In addition, he set up three new ones to supervise justice, the *habous*, and the domain lands respectively. All of these were natives, and together they constituted the Council of Viziers, which managed those departments which the dyarchy-arrange-

<sup>40</sup> Introduction to Lyautey Report, 1916, *op. cit.*, p. xiii.

<sup>41</sup> Lyautey Report, 1916, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

ment left in native hands. Briefly, they looked after internal civil government.<sup>41</sup>

Under them, and spreading their influence in the country, were the *Caid*s or tribal leaders, the *Pachas* or town leaders, and the *Cadis* or civil religious judges, all of them age-old officials in Morocco. Legislation was by decrees known as *dahirs*, which were issued by the Sultan and the Grand Vizier, after the approval of the Resident-General. All legislation was in this manner, and, even to-day, the direct decrees of the Resident-General are limited entirely to the French colony. Save for the reconstitution of the Council of Viziers and the reform in all branches of the organization, government, in so far as the ordinary native was concerned, went on as before. There was as little tampering as possible with ordinary civil affairs. Lyautey held that a protectorate implied government by the existing native authorities as far as possible, and that the French were there, not to supplant or even to reform unduly, but simply to supervise. It was a genuine division of power, with the bulk of internal administration left to the natives.

But, over and above this, there was scope for a very real French organization. Clearly, the unobtrusive French officials were the force that galvanized the whole into activity. They so kept their fingers on all developments, even in the most remote rural district of the occupied area, that they could pounce on any case of disaffection or maladministration. The control was in the background, it is true, but it was always there, just as the insignificant buildings of the Protectorate Administration were almost invisible behind the stately palace of the Sultan at Rabat. Moreover, even in internal administration, the French claimed a sphere of their own from the first. They held that their power of supervision implied the right of introducing any reforms they deemed fit, and, of course, the power to reform really meant a permanent control. If the execution of the reform and the *minutiae* of administration rested with the natives, the French retained all power of initiation and direction. For instance, in 1912, Lyautey elaborated his programme of administrative reforms, and it will be seen that, to carry out such a comprehensive programme, the higher French officials were really to administer. The financial system was to be transformed, past disorders to be eradicated, and entirely new bases laid down for the future. The land-system was to be regularized, and, in particular, the State Domains protected from spoliation (this latter involving an inquiry into all previous grants). All public works were to be under the French, and a Department of Economic

<sup>41</sup> *La Renaissance du Maroc. Dix Ans de Protectorat, 1912-1922* (Resident-General, 1922), p. 116 *et seq.*

Affairs set up to develop the country. The entire future of France in Morocco was seen to depend on this economic penetration, and, in its furtherance, French agents were to have powers which greatly limited the rights of native officials.<sup>43</sup>

In short, after Lyautey had eradicated the most obvious abuses in central and local administration, he concentrated on the economic phases of the situation. Naturally, as Morocco was a backward agricultural country, this came down to matters of land and public works. The land position was especially difficult, because that *bête noire* of Moslem countries, the *habous*-question, was here even more involved than in Algeria and Tunisia. The last two Sultans, the one from weakness and the other from avarice, had devastated these religious lands, and the natural sensitiveness of the Mohammedan population made reform almost impossible. Apart from this, the question of the State Domain (*Biens du Makhzen*) was in itself perplexing, because this obvious source of revenue had also been the playing-ground of the last few Sultans. Lyautey found its Treasury completely empty in December, 1912, its resources largely dissipated (Moulay Hafid alone had converted 18 million francs' worth to his own use), and the remaining lands so neglected as to be almost worthless. The consolidation and restoration of both *habous* and Domain were pressing but awkward tasks, especially because the straightening-out of past policies meant the alienation of those powerful natives who had profited by the illicit dispersals of recent years. Yet, because these lands were the pick of the country, the future of agriculture largely depended on the solution of the problem.<sup>44</sup>

This done, Lyautey had to face the wider economic question. Morocco was then, as it must be in the future, almost entirely an agricultural country. In 1912, 61 million francs of a total of 66 million of its exports were of agricultural produce. To develop the country, then, meant to increase its agricultural resources, and this in turn meant public works, which were practically non-existent when the French came. Lyautey therefore insisted on a loan of 230 million francs, because, as he said, "the moving wall of occupation" could not function otherwise. Agricultural development entailed ports and roads and railways, of which the country had practically none. Without these, the 80,000 men whom France was maintaining in the land and the 274 million francs which she had spent up to 1912, were being wasted. It is a good commentary on French colonial methods at this stage to note that the loan-project dwindled to 170½ million francs and took eleven months, until March,

<sup>43</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Jan. 1912, p. 218.

<sup>44</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 14/6/12 (Poincaré); report in *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1912, p. 381.

1914, even to pass the Deputies! <sup>45</sup> In the interim, Lyautey simply had to mark time, for economic reforms could not be undertaken without the necessary funds. <sup>46</sup>

In the first three years, therefore, such economic penetration as there was, apart from the formulation of general plans for the future, was carried out by private individuals. In this direction, despite the bad harvests of 1912-1913, the development was remarkable, and indeed unparalleled in the history of French colonization. By the end of 1913, the French population had increased from 5,400 to 26,000, and there were over 400 Frenchmen on the land. Casablanca had become a flourishing commercial city, and, within a year of occupation, the Shawia and the Gharb were given over to civil government. Despite the obstruction of the French Parliament, economic penetration and political organization were proceeding hand in hand in the occupied coastal zone. Nor was this the less important because the South, the land of the *Caida*s, was going on as before, and the North was but precariously occupied: it was the rich coastal-zone that was the key to the country, because the *hinterland* is mainly an unproductive barrier. France had thus started well, <sup>47</sup> although, by 1914, further development was clearly dependent on communications,—and here the veto of the French Parliament played the deciding part.

#### THE EFFECT OF THE WAR ON MOROCCO

The definite crisis in Morocco came with the War. The demands of France brooked no half-measures, and the ministerial declaration of July 27-28 left no doubts as to the absolute ban on the continued penetration of the country. The aim, according to the official statement, was:—

“To maintain in Morocco only the minimum of indispensable force, as the fate of Morocco will be decided in Lorraine; to reduce the occupation to the principal ports, if possible to the Khenifra-Fez-Ujda line of communication; and to temporarily abandon all advance posts and markets, the first care being to return to the coast all foreigners and Frenchmen in the interior.” <sup>48</sup>

That is, France was not to advance, not even to hold the organized territory, but to withdraw to a few ports. It was the abandonment of Morocco that was clearly envisaged in these Instructions: Paris, never

<sup>45</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 19, 21/3/14. For opposition, see *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 16/7/14; Senate, 19/6/14.

<sup>46</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Sept. 1912, p. 363.

<sup>47</sup> *Journal Officiel*, docts. parl., 1914, No. 3578 (Messimy Report on Moroccan Budget for 1914), is a long summary of the work of the protectorate,—most important. Compare the Milliès-Lacroix Report in *Journal Officiel*, Senate, 31/3/14.

<sup>48</sup> In *La Renaissance du Maroc*, 1912-1922, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

too enthusiastic on the Moroccan advance, had given way to panic, as the after-events proved.

But Lyautey stood firm and openly opposed this point of view. He knew that even to stand still meant defeat and that, if France once started to withdraw, that would be the end. The peculiar facts of the Moroccan situation and the vagaries of Moslem psychology made any limitation of French efforts tantamount to complete failure. France had either to go on, and keep going on, or get out for ever. Lyautey therefore insisted, and rightly so, that any partial abandonment was quite impracticable, because it would at once involve a general rising and because the coast could not be held by itself. In a complete disregard of his instructions, therefore, he formulated a counter-policy,—“To keep Morocco for France until the end, not only as a possession or as a conquered prize, but as a reserve of resources of all kinds for the mother-country.” He carried out his Instructions in sending back to France all the troops asked for, but, at the same time, resolved neither to abandon Morocco nor to retreat.<sup>40</sup>

The key to his amazing policy was simple. He knew that Machiavelli's maxim, “All the world believes you are what you seem,” had a peculiar significance in the Mohammedan world, and he knew the importance of the policy of prestige which he had been so resolutely pursuing in the previous years. Further, he was prepared to gamble on his correct interpretation of Mohammedan psychology and to risk everything on a combination of dexterity and audacity. He had to keep on attacking,—that was the crux of the situation. Though his communications were menaced and though he was faced with the fear of a general insurrection ahead, he held his front line. Yet he was unsupported in France and had his effectives reduced by at least two-thirds!

But this was not enough, for the very fact of stopping the advance, an advance that had been continuous since the first days of occupation, in itself created a new position. The fact was that the French defence could not be a passive one, it had to be active. In other words, as Lyautey himself said, there had to be incessant activity even to stand still. But clearly, with his reduced effectives, he could not maintain his former activities. He could not hold the coast and the occupied *hinterland* with the forces left at his disposal, so that a withdrawal in some form or other seemed inevitable. At this juncture he played his master-stroke. Since he could hold only a section, that section would be the front line; since he must evacuate, he would evacuate the settled regions. Instead of withdrawing to the coast, as prudence and his orders dictated, he withdrew from the coast to the fighting-line, leaving his policy of

<sup>40</sup> Introduction to Lyautey Report, 1916, *op. cit.*, p. iv.

public works and economic penetration to guard the coastal regions. He saved the Shawia, not in the farmers' boundaries but in the Atlas foothills. The gradual forward policy went on, the real feebleness of his effectives being masked by an exaggerated mobility.

The policy succeeded by its very audacity. The War had come at the worst possible moment, when the Taza and Khenifra extensions had been undertaken but not completed. Three months sooner or three months later would have made all the difference, because then the new move would have been either unstarted or finished: as it was, France was confronting the hardest fighters in Morocco—the Riata and Zaian, neither of whom had been broken, and withdrawal before whom would have meant a union of the Rif and the Sus, and a bursting of the latent fanaticism all over the land. But the menace was removed by dint of Lyautey's policies of prestige and movement; and the communication between East and West, though still held only by a narrow isthmus between the rebels of the North and the South, was re-established. Further, by the end of 1917, the Meknès-Taflelt route, perhaps the most important in Morocco from an economic point of view, was secured. This restored all of the South-east to the Moroccan market and incidentally cut the Berber *massif* in two, separating the rebels of the High Atlas from their fellows in the Middle Atlas. By 1919, therefore, Lyautey had increased the occupied area by almost half, from 163,000 square kilometres in January, 1914, to 235,000.<sup>50</sup> The *Makhzen* was intruding on the *Sûba* in all directions, the mountains were pierced, and communication between the four parts of the land secured anew.

Despite this spectacular advance, the more difficult task had been in the coastal regions, where Lyautey was relying on a policy of economic development. And the point was that, if the fate of the Shawia was being decided in the Atlas foothills, the activities in the Shawia were no less deciding the upshot in the fighting zone. As Lyautey himself summed the matter up in January, 1916, "it was, in effect, due to the intense and incessant native and economic policies that the country has been able to guard itself in the advanced front posts. Native policy and economic policy,—these are the two essential factors in the progress realized in Morocco in the past eighteen months." To divert the natives and to take their minds from that uncertainty which was the forerunner of dissidence, Lyautey insisted not only on the maintenance of normal economic activities, but on a speeding-up in all directions. An aggressive policy of public works was to compensate for the diminution of military resources, and the natives, as a result, were to be as much impressed with the French power as ever,—but with the powers of peace as distinct from

<sup>50</sup> *Annuaire Economique et Financière du Maroc*, 1918-1919, p. 43 et seq.



those of war. The soldiers had passed to the Atlas, the engineers had come, and the natives were taught to look on this as the normal sequence of events, and not as a concession to a crisis.

Accordingly, there was almost feverish activity in the economic field.<sup>51</sup> The coastal programme of a huge modern port at Casablanca and four secondary ports along the Atlantic coast went on: road construction continued, because the problem of Morocco was how to get her farming goods to market: and the railway-programme of 1914 was continued. Lyautey was fortunate in having the loan-money, 70½ million francs of which had been raised in July, 1914, come to hand at this time, and in being able to take advantage of the greater disbursements of money under war conditions. Great exhibitions were held at Casablanca, Fez, and Rabat to stress the essential safety of Morocco and to instil a sense of the country's resources into native minds. In short, everything went on as usual,—public, social, and even artistic works. This attitude towards a crisis was something the fighting Mohammedan could understand. It was a warrior's attitude: its easy fatalism accorded well with their philosophy: and it so cemented their loyalty to Lyautey the man that they came to accept innovations which they would usually have questioned. Lyautey had correctly interpreted Moslem psychology. Thus, his Committees of Economic Studies, founded to supplement the unduly narrow Chambers of Commerce, and to embrace all of the "notables" in a given region, proved very popular. They brought the fact of government home to ordinary natives, while the promise of elective Chambers of Commerce at some future date rallied to his cause those natives who wanted a more liberal *régime*. The upshot was that he not only maintained his position during the war-years, but, in addition, took an inventory of the country's resources, won over the agricultural and trading leaders among the natives, and pushed forward the roads and railways which were to be the main items in that post-war economic struggle for which he was always preparing. "To safeguard Morocco in the actual struggle and to prepare her in advance for the great economic struggle which will follow the War,—such has been the double objective," he wrote. The consequence was that 1919 saw a Morocco, not exhausted or enfeebled, but in a stronger economic position than ever. The bonds between French and natives in the settled zone were stronger than before, the land was conquered up to the Middle Atlas, and Morocco was ready for a new forward policy in the economic world.

<sup>51</sup> Lyautey Report, 1916, *op. cit.*, p. xviii et seq.; *L'Afrique Française*, March, 1915, p. 47.

#### IV. The Results Achieved

##### NATIVE POLICY.

As has been seen, the *crux* of Lyautey's policy was always, before and during the War, to bring about a *rapprochement* with the natives. The conscious subordination of the military arm to political methods demonstrated this, as also did the scrupulous care with which he safeguarded native customs. To Lyautey it was clear that the economic and social development of the land had to be firm-built on the foundation of native co-operation, and he knew that this could only be achieved by a negation of the old Algerian policy of *refoulement* and by leaving a definite place for native aspirations. The success of this, in turn, largely depended on a correct analysis of the situation and on rightly forecasting the result of the various reforms on native minds. Toleration was not enough: there had to be sympathy, and, for this to be effective, understanding was necessary.

The native problem in Morocco was far from being an easy one. The bulk of the population are Berbers, who are really a European *enclave*, shut off from Africa by the barrier of the Atlas. The fact that they are in essence white has most important implications for present policy, because their mentality is quite distinct from that of the negro and the Arab. It is true that there has been a great deal of mixture on the Berber basis and that to-day only three large Berber groups (Rifs, Beraber, Chleuh) may be distinguished; but the typical Berber organization is far more widely spread. As revealed by Doutté, it is a patriarchal organization, with great emphasis on local assemblies or *djemaas*. The Berber is a born xenophobist, and, being essentially localist, opposes the governors and *caïds* of the Islamic organization. The religious and civil laws of Islam are anathema to him, even though he will accept a superficial Mohammedanism. These tribes are *par excellence* the mountain-dwellers: as one nears the settled coastal-districts, signs of Arab infiltration become more and more noticeable. But, even in the plains, the Berbers still form the base of the population, and the Arabs, who have been in Morocco permanently since the eleventh century, are only the surface element. Morocco is more a land of Arabized Berbers than of Berberized Arabs, and it is clear that the influence of the Arab conquerors has been much smaller, numerically, than was hitherto supposed.<sup>52</sup>

On the other hand, the Mohammedan religion and Arab organization were supreme in the plains, and each advance of the *Makhzen* on the

<sup>52</sup> V. Piquet, *Le Maroc* (3rd edition, 1920), p. 217 *et seq.*, or *Les Peuples Marocains* (1925). See Map No. 21 (p. 546), and No. 24 (p. 554).

*Blad Siba* meant an extension of the Arab organization: that was one reason why the mountaineers resisted so strenuously. If the Arabs were unimportant from a numerical point of view, their general influence was steadily growing. To complicate the demographical problem of Morocco, there were the Moors who came in from Spain, and the 150,000 Jews who lived under special autonomous councils (*maamads*) and Rabbinical justice. There is thus no one native problem in Morocco, but at least three,—Arab, Berber, and Jew,—each demanding an utterly different solution. The existence of such radical differences rendered one all-embracing solution out of the question, unless France became the sponsor of one section of the population and subjugated the rest. But the distribution of the Arabs and the strength of the Berbers rendered this impossible, even had it been considered. Clearly, any solution of the native problems of Morocco had to be based on a recognition of the differences between the various races, as neither was weak enough to go to the wall.

As has been seen, Lyautey realized this from the first, and formulated the general background of his policy as early as 1912.<sup>53</sup> In so far as the natives in general were concerned, his was to be a policy of respect of customs, medical assistance, aid to markets, native education, and active participation in municipal government. But the difficulty lay in the conversion of such a scheme into practice, the phrase "respect of customs" in itself, for instance, raising myriads of troublesome questions.

Fortunately, the nature of the resistance to the French was such as to enable them to deal with each particular native problem as it arose and to prevent the folly of attempting a universal native policy. The issue first arose in the old *Makhzen*, the "Government Land," from Fez and Marrakesh to the coast: and here, a solution was relatively easy, because the tribes were normally law-abiding and tax-paying. The tribesmen of the Shawia and Gharb and Fez were essentially agriculturists. They wanted a stable government, and naturally joined the government which would protect them from the raids of the unsettled inlanders. Their mutual interests made them loyal to France. Here, then, pacification was at a minimum, and all that France had to do was to keep the administration in the hands of *cuids*, *pachas*, and *cadis*, and to eradicate the most obvious abuses.

The second problem was presented by the next layer of tribes,—those which had submitted when the Sultan was strong but rebelled when he was weak. To the French, each of these presented a special problem, but most were in the South and came to be organized under the *Grands Cuids*. These *Cuids* were really feudal barons, with strongly organized

<sup>53</sup> In *L'Afrique Française*, 1912, pp. 480, 481.

tribes in the Atlas foothills. France recognized this pre-existing organization and turned it to account by accepting a kind of seigniorial tenure over the *Grands Caïds*. Both sides gained by the contract, and France was enabled to build up a buffer-belt of friendly tribes between the settled regions and the unruly mountainous interior. It may be, of course, that such an arrangement, while advantageous to the interests of France and the *Caïds* themselves, placed a premium on the exploitation of the tribesmen by those *Caïds* who used the *imprimatur* they received from the French to abuse their position : and it may be, too, that France was unduly strengthening a cause which might be turned against its benefactor. But the first of these difficulties was the lesser of two evils, and the second proved to be baseless in fact, because so loyal were the *Grands Caïds* that, all through the War, France had only three battalions at most in a territory a third the size of the homeland.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, the configuration of the country is such that the *Caïds* could only turn against France by taking a stand in the mountains : and, as this would mean abandoning the plains where most of their wealth is concentrated, the French hold that there is a strong material guarantee for the *Caïds'* loyalty. The policy of the *Grands Caïds* has undoubtedly been successful. A quarter of Morocco is effectively safeguarded for France by these suzerains of the Grand Atlas, and, as the lands in question are useless for purposes of colonization, France is losing nothing. All that she does is to proffer general advice, but she does not intervene in ordinary government. The *Grands Caïds* are really protected native princes, managing their own affairs.

Far more difficult was the third belt of tribes, the interior mountaineers, the Berbers proper. The difficulty here is one of a distinct race and language and religion and social organization, although the divisions in none of these fields are clear-cut. The mountaineers are localists and, having a social order founded on an extreme democracy, take a firm stand against the Arab language and the *Makhzen* organization. They fight any outside authority which wants to modify their social state and customs, and therefore France had, above all things, to avoid any introduction of the *Makhzen* institution to such tribes.

"On the contrary, our first care must be to reassure them in this regard, and, as soon as the guns have stopped speaking, to avoid arousing them by narrow administrative measures, or speaking of *caïds* to those who have never had them, or of *cadis* to those who ignore such officials. We must constantly think of local manners and customs, and, when innovation is

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<sup>54</sup> *La Renaissance du Maroc*, 1912-1922, *op. cit.*, pp. 153-155 ; Lyautey Report, 1916, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

necessary, make it with the utmost prudence, and without believing ourselves bound by those Moslem forms that we have followed elsewhere.”<sup>55</sup>

That is, a separate policy was needed for the Berbers, who were either not at all, or only superficially, “Arabicized.” In particular, Lyautey took care not to give undue privileges to Arab minorities which found themselves within the Berber country. To the contrary, an essentially *Berber* policy was followed. There was to be neutrality in religious matters, in which the tribesmen could either go to Islam or retain their old magic and superstitions or, as was usual, mix them all up together : and, in political organization, *caïds* and *cadis*, Arab officials and Moslem judges respectively, were to be kept out. Instead, the old Berber *djemaas* were to be recognized. The existing patriarchal organization was to be kept intact, and the Berbers were to evolve along their own lines.

Beyond these again were another class of tribes, the frontiersmen, who were still fighting. As soon as they were subdued, these had to offer an indemnity, become tax-payers, and keep the local peace. They live in those regions where Lyautey’s “moving wall of occupation” is still gradually advancing. It is a point of honour with them to fight, but it is usually a fight without hate, and, once having resisted, they are prepared to settle down. But a display of force is still needed to impress them and to induce organization ; and it is in these regions that the military “Intelligence Officers,” who are indeed the key to the whole of Lyautey’s organization, play their leading part. As pacification proceeds, they give way to “Civil Controllers,” who perform similar functions, but with the element of force not so much in the foreground.<sup>56</sup>

Thus, there are several distinct native policies in Morocco, the essence of the French attitude being to vary the method according to the circumstances in each case, but always following a fixed general principle. This principle is “the policy of association,” which means that each tribal unit is to develop along its own particular racial or social lines, with each, by reason of the autonomous development allowed, contributing its share to the general whole.

The general native problem found especially troublesome reflections in the particular problems of education and justice. Both of these were very old, both entirely religious and accordingly dangerous to touch. But something had to be done with them, because the one was simply mediæval and the other corrupt : and both were inadequate to meet the demands of modern economic existence. Apart from the ingrained

<sup>55</sup> Lyautey Report, 1916, *op. cit.*, p. 44. A good account is in *Geographical Journal*, August, 1918, p. 88.

<sup>56</sup> For this transition, see *La Renaissance du Maroc*, 1912-1922, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-129.

conservatism and the religious nature of each, however, the trouble was that there were as many educational and judicial problems as there were races. The problem was to provide varying solutions, all of which should meet the needs of the new economic programme which the French were using to transform Morocco. Education proved the easier of the two in this connection. To be useful in the changing economic conditions and in the new colonial stage when assimilation to France is looked on as an evil, education had to be of a practical nature. "Pre-apprenticeship" is the term the French use in explaining their efforts in this connection,—that is, industrial education in the towns, farming in the country, and secondary education at "Schools for the Sons of Notables" for those whose destiny it is not to work with their hands. Literary education is thus at a discount, and vocational education is the touchstone of the whole system. Little adverse criticism, whether in the way of methods or aims, can be made against this educational system: the only question is whether, here as elsewhere, the practical achievement is not lagging behind the general plan.

Justice was a more difficult problem, because the innate tendency of the Frenchman towards codification is always a hindrance in Moslem countries, where the ambiguities of Koranic law are looked on as something natural, if not desirable. Lyautey naturally declared for an entirely modern organization (March, 1913), because how otherwise, for instance, could economic advance be coupled with the absurd entanglements of native land-laws? Even in the purely native section, the idea behind his reforms was to secularize the law,—to replace the *Cadi's* religious tribunal by political courts. In 1912, France found a land of endless litigation and judicial anarchy. Steps were at once taken to secure central control by means of a Minister of Justice, to limit the *cadi's* authority in land matters, and to make criminal justice less arbitrary. For the rest, the general principles of the Algerian Code of 1903 were followed, with French law in criminal cases and a modernized native system for civil cases. The religious law of the *Cadis* was supervised but, because of its essentially religious sanctions, not vitally altered, save on the economic side: but the civil law of the *caids*, free from this religious complexity, was entirely reorganized. The special needs of the Berbers, too, were taken into account, and they were allowed to continue their judgments by "Customs" (*izref*),—a privilege which had been denied to their fellows in Kabylie. The regulation of justice was, in a word, based on the same general principles (respect of native organization, modernization, and variation according to various circumstances) which determined the wider native policy. The needs of economic and social advance on the one side, and the prejudices of the natives on the other,

were alike considered, so that French and natives both secured their ends. The compromise was strikingly successful, the more so in such a Moslem country, where land-litigation plays so important a part in native life, and where all law is so mixed up with religion.<sup>57</sup>

#### ECONOMIC POLICY.

As has been seen, France was successful in her native policy in the coastal regions and in the South ; but the success in this field was, after all, not as striking as was the economic transformation. Here lies the real work of the French in Morocco,—the change by which the backward and anarchic country of 1908 has become the third of the French colonies, in so far as trade is concerned. The change is the more striking because of the intervention of the War and because the pre-existing treaties prevented the application of the protectionist *régime* on which France relied so much in her other colonies.

The growth is best reflected in the trade statistics :—

	IMPORTS. (Millions of Francs.)	EXPORTS.				
1913	181	40				
1918	314	115				
1919	480	228—franc at average of 35	to	£1		
1920	1000-474	268-875	"	"	"	50 "
1921	909-164	306-446	"	"	"	62-5 "
1922	777-875	237-466	"	"	"	62-5 "
1923	779-750	272-384	"	"	"	75 "
1924	925-411	622-482	"	"	"	88 "

Even considering the depreciation of the franc, this table shows a substantial increase. There has always been, it must be admitted, an unfavourable trade-balance, because Morocco is a new country and because the programme of public works unduly inflates the list of imports ; but this is diminishing, especially now that the close of the War has allowed a return to more normal conditions. From 1920 to 1924, exports passed from 25 per cent. to 40 per cent. of the total commerce, despite the crises of 1921–1923 : and this was no abnormal growth, because it was based on the firm foundation of agricultural production.<sup>58</sup>

Another remarkable feature is that Morocco affords the same lesson as West Africa,—that, where France has relied on protectionist methods to secure a trading predominance, she has failed, but that, under "the open door," she has forged to the front, under the spur of competition.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Lyantey Report, 1916, *op. cit.*, p. 210 ; *La Renaissance du Maroc*, *op. cit.*, p. 187 *et seq.*

<sup>58</sup> *Ce qu'il faut savoir du Maroc* (1926), p. 103, for good analysis ; *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1923, p. 346.

<sup>59</sup> J. Donon, *Le Régime douanier du Maroc et le Développement du Commerce marocain jusqu'à nos jours*, for documents.

In Morocco, for instance, despite the principle of equality for all nations, France has come to command 64·5 per cent. of the imports and 52·4 per cent. of the exports. But it must be noted that the decline of the franc, by compelling the Moroccans to resort to France for their purchases, has had a share in bringing about this result on the import side, while, as regards exports, French predominance is easily explained by the fact that Morocco produces the cereals that France needs so badly. Moreover, if France could secure no preference in Morocco, she could secure a preference for Moroccan goods in entering France,—a law of March, 1923, for example, authorizing the free entry of a number of important Moroccan products.

However this may be, there is no doubt that Morocco has expanded remarkably since 1912, although it should be noted that this expansion is not so much in new directions as in merely enlarging tendencies already there. While this is almost inevitable in a country that is primarily agricultural and pastoral, it is curious how little manufactures have developed, even in the way of treating the agricultural products on the spot. Lyautey, while concentrating on the commercial and agricultural sides of economic development, was never concerned with industry, either European or local; and, even in the agricultural sphere, his policy was criticized as not sufficiently favouring capitalistic development,—in the direction of irrigation ventures, for instance. The result was that, until 1919, industry was practically non-existent in Morocco, despite the obvious openings for cement-milling and tanning ventures, to quote instances at random. There were no products manufactured for export, and, as compared with Algeria and Tunisia, even native industries were singularly little developed. There were really none, beyond the tanning at Tafilelt and Fez, the cloth-stuffs and slippers of Fez, and the carpets of Rabat. It is true that there has been a marked development in this direction since 1919, especially in the treatment of oils and grain-products and meat; but the problem has in general hardly been touched.

The French effort has rather been in providing the preliminary necessities for development, especially means of communication. Roads, railways and ports have engrossed their activities. Without these, no progress was possible; yet all of them alike were practically unknown in the Morocco of 1912. The growth of the five ports in particular, where before there had been but silted river-mouths or dangerous bars, is in itself one of the romances of colonization. Casablanca, the brightest spot in French efforts in Morocco, has had a remarkable life. In 1908, it was a squalid Moorish town of some 10,000 people, with scarcely 500 Europeans: by 1918, after Lyautey had made it the pivot of his whole



scheme of development, it was transformed into a well-equipped European town with a population of 82,500, including 37,500 Europeans, and with a trade equal to that of Oran. To-day (1925) the population is over 116,000, and, since the opening of its port in 1923, it is the port of entry for Morocco. Already the seventh of French ports, it does no less than 70 per cent. of the country's trade, for the secondary ports of Lyautey's scheme are only regional outlets.<sup>60</sup>

The railway-question has not been so simple, because, when the French occupied the land, treaties banned all lines except for strictly military purposes, and specified in particular that no commercial railway was to be allowed until the Tangier-Fez project was completed. This was a survival of the Franco-German Agreement of November, 1911, and, as it turned away trade and development from the French centre of Casablanca, was naturally unpalatable to France. But the War removed German surveillance and enabled France to embark on a great railway-scheme cleaving Morocco in two, and linking Casablanca with Tunisia. By June, 1921, the scheme was realized, Casablanca being united with Ujda, on the Algerian frontier. A year before, another line had pushed south from Casablanca to Marrakesh, and, by September, 1925, 1,660 kilometres of railway were in operation. Most of these had the small 60-cm. gauge, for France, despite colonial experience elsewhere, persists in favouring light-railways, as precursors of the normal-gauge lines.<sup>61</sup>

Parallel with, and even more quickly than, railways, road-construction has gone on. By 1926, there were 3,000 kilometres of road where there were but 18 in 1913: and the effects of these improved communications, together with the new security, caused a remarkable revival of internal trade. Goods from ever-widening areas could come to those *souks* or markets which are the centres of Moroccan trade and which, since there are only 80,000 Europeans to 5½ million natives, are the most important economic element in the land. The stabilization of money in 1920 and the generalization of the metric system aided this development, the result in general being a complete metamorphosis of Moroccan rural life. As the old analogy says, Morocco is still a panther's skin, all yellow, save for the black spots which represent the cultivated areas and fairs: but now there is the significant difference that the spots are connected as they have never been before. The old opposition between the organized towns and the unorganized country is now giving way to a new opposi-

<sup>60</sup> *Geographical Journal*, August, 1918, p. 85; *Revue de Géographie Marocaine*, 1926, Vol. V, p. 43; and plans in *La Renaissance du Maroc*, *op. cit.*, pp. 329-333.

<sup>61</sup> Crosson-Duplessix, "Étude sur les chemins de fer marocains," in *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie d'Alger*, Vol. XXVII, 1922, p. 161; article by Tarde in *Geographical Review*, Vol. VIII, 1919, p. 12; *La Renaissance du Maroc*, *op. cit.*, p. 264 *et seq.* See Map No. 22, p. 546.

tion, an opposition none the less keen between towns and country, which are both organized entities, though organized in different ways. The French policy of improved communications has thus come to mean a centralization within each rural area, together with a striking decentralization of influence from the few cities to the wider-spread rural centres,—tendencies which are gradually transforming the balance of power in Moroccan life.

Everything in Morocco comes back to the land. All of the natives, except some 10,000 employees in industrial ventures, are either rural workers or traders, and the financial position of the State is peculiarly dependent on rural prosperity. Most of the taxes are on an *ad val.* basis, although that means that the State's resources fluctuate with the seasons, and that, in last resource, Morocco is at the mercy of its variable climate. While the State shares in a period of prosperity, such as the boom that reached its height in 1919–1920, it also encounters a crisis when harvests fail.

Despite this capriciousness, Moroccan finances have always been sound, as the country is very rich and agriculture is still in a primitive state. There has never been any difficulty in making the budget balance, except in 1913–1914. Even in the war-years, the position was favourable. Because two-thirds of the taxes were indirect, conditions of inflation and rural prosperity swelled the budget receipts,—so much so, indeed, that boom conditions emerged. Greater receipts naturally led to a freer spending policy, and the rapid inflation of the budget, aided as it was by the long currency-duel between the State Bank and the Bank of Algeria until 1924, caused concern in commercial circles. There was a frenzied banking position, an unduly optimistic outlook in State finances, over-ambitious projects of public works, and in brief, an assumption that the boom-conditions of 1919 were permanent and could afford the basis for future calculations. Under these conditions, the general collapse of 1921–1923 was a salutary *douche* to the optimists by showing the necessity for a gradual and consolidated advance. Since then, progress, if more restrained, has been on a sounder basis, and at present is determined, not by the artificial foundation of an inflated currency or by unwarranted credit, but by the expectation of moderate harvests and the rapidly developing phosphate industry. It is reasoned and sound and slow, so that a quiet optimism replaces both the unrestrained optimism of 1919–1920 and the pessimism of the lean years of 1921–1923.<sup>61</sup>

The general financial position is that Morocco pays the costs of its internal government, while France meets the military bill. Arguing

*Survey of Economic and Commercial Conditions in Morocco, Algeria, etc. 1924 1925* (Department of Overseas Trade, London), p. 10 *et seq.*

from this basis, a report of 1922 claims that the country has been entirely self-sufficient since the first day of occupation! Indeed, Lyautey goes further and holds that Morocco has cost France only a milliard of francs in all,—“the cost of five days of war.”<sup>63</sup> But he arrives at this result by deducting the cost of maintaining the troops had there been no Morocco, and also the economy effected by keeping the cost of Moroccan cereals one-third that of French during the war! In reality, Morocco cost France 3½ milliards of francs to the close of 1922 (Spanish Morocco in the same period cost over 2 milliards!).<sup>64</sup> Fighting Moslem fanatics in inaccessible mountain country is not a cheap pastime for a country with embarrassed finances, and no amount of artificial deductions can lessen the real bill.

In addition there is the Moroccan debt of 705½ million francs, a large part of which is guaranteed by the French State. Indeed, by the laws of 1914 and 1920, loans of a milliard francs were authorized for the two big projects of public works alone,<sup>65</sup> and France stands sponsor for this huge amount. The aggressive policy of public works thus has its reverse side, and it is at least dubious whether France has not unduly emphasized the more expensive and ambitious works to the detriment, the neglect even, of the less spectacular, but even more urgent, agricultural reforms. In a word, it is questionable if the objective pursued has been sufficiently comprehensive.

Nevertheless, Morocco's position is still fundamentally sound. Only a sixth of the revenue goes for debt-payments: the accumulated budget-balances amounted to 180 million francs by 1921: taxation is low: agriculture is flourishing and is capable of vast improvement: and trade is becoming more normal with the development of exports. If the programme of public works is kept sufficiently within limits and, above all, directed to the fostering of agriculture instead of more or less visionary projects of future development, there seems no reason why Morocco should not continue to prosper, for it is one of the richest lands controlled by France.

#### LAND SETTLEMENT

As has been emphasized, Morocco is a predominantly agricultural country, and naturally, questions of land-law and settlement have loomed largely in the forefront of French difficulties there. Land matters are always difficult in Moslem countries, because they are so interwoven

<sup>63</sup> In *La Renaissance du Maroc*, op. cit., pp. 233, 234.

<sup>64</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Jan. 1922, p. 40. The Spanish figure is in March, 1923, p. 151.

<sup>65</sup> The loan of 1914 is for 242 millions, that of 1920 for 774. For the position in this regard, see *L'Afrique Française*, April 1922, p. 195.

with religion : but they are the worse in Morocco, where the position is so complicated as to defy definition. Native life assumes many different forms in the land. There are nomads, *transhumant* semi-pastoralists who mix agricultural and pastoral pursuits, and sedentary fruit-growers : and, for each, there are different property-laws. Each property-régime is determined by a mixture of tradition and economics. Fruit-lands, cereal lands in the plains, and pasture lands are all regulated by different systems ; and, to complicate matters, the laws for each type of property vary with the strength of the tribe concerned, its peculiar social customs, and the degree of order in the given district. There is no basic system and no general principle to which an appeal can be made.

As an external complication are the *habous* or religious lands, one of the thorniest problems in Moslem countries. The French had their experience in Algeria and Tunisia to know that a rash venture in this matter more often than not provoked rebellion, and that even supposedly conciliatory policies often produced quite opposite results.

It is true that the French had a century of experience to guide them when the Moroccan issue arose, but, on the other hand, the position there was far more complicated than they had encountered elsewhere. Local variations in custom confronted them everywhere, and were accentuated by the mountainous nature of the country : the degree of disorder in the land prevented any comprehensive view of the problem : the rivalry of Berber and Arab, townsmen and country-dwellers, met them everywhere : the prodigal alienation of the last Alaouite Sultans had taken the best lands and " the dead hand " of Islam was over the most desirable portions that remained : and, once any reform was undertaken, France was confronted by her treaty obligations and the rights of the agricultural *protégés* of the various European Powers. It all seemed an inextricably confused maze : and yet the French had to intervene,—for two reasons at least. They had to find out where they stood in connection with the natives, in matters of taxation, for instance : and they had to provide land for European colonization. The native group had to have security, the Government had to have order, and the settler had to have land. The difficulty was to find the proper principles for deciding these issues and to apply them so as to avert rebellions, and in particular the cry against the sacrilegious Unbeliever,—the dread *Allahu il Akbar* that ran like wildfire through the bazaars and fired the smouldering fanaticism of the Moslems when their religion, through their lands, was tampered with. The position was such as to make the most experienced legislator quail : none knew better than Lyautey how easy, how almost inevitable, it was to arouse distrust. Yet, on the other hand, if the French were to organize Morocco, the position had to be attacked. Delay, as had been

evident already since the onrush of foreigners after 1908, merely accentuated the difficulties of the situation.

The most obvious task was to define the various classes of land. Accordingly, the first act in the *Journal Officiel* of the Protectorate (November 1, 1912) did this and explained how each class was to be dealt with ; and this has been the basis of all subsequent legislation on the topic. Then the rights of the State had to be restored. There had been much squandering of the State's resources under the last Sultans, Moulay Hafid alone having reduced the State patrimony by two-thirds. How serious this evil was may be seen from the fact that the Government compelled grantees to disgorge 230 million francs' worth of land obtained illicitly, and there is still much that is dubiously held. A similar investigation was carried out with the *habous* or religious lands, and France arranged for a native Commission under a Vizier and a rigid earmarking of the receipts for purely Mohammedan purposes. But these reforms were merely clearing the way for the real issue,—the problem of the collective or group-lands which make up most of Morocco and which are inalienable under Koranic law. There had been much illicit speculation in this field before the French appeared on the scene, and this was so fruitful a source of friction and unrest that a *dahir* of July, 1914, categorically forbade the alienation of collective lands.

So far so good. These measures had eradicated abuse and had safeguarded the interests both of Government and natives. But here entered a new element. Settlers demanded land, the more dogmatically because Morocco was clearly under-populated. But the trouble was that all land had claimants, and even unused land was so enmeshed in a maze of traditional claims that its utilization appeared almost impossible, especially with semi-subdued tribes seeking pretexts for rebellion. Yet, if Morocco was to develop from the existing stage of primitive agriculture, there had to be European settlers and capital.

Previous experiments in this direction had not been happy. The Conference of Madrid (1880) had given foreigners the right to own land in Morocco, and the General Act of Algeciras had confirmed this : but the practical difficulties were so numerous that an intermediate form of exploitation emerged,—“ association ” with a native.<sup>66</sup> The European gave advances to his *mokhalat* or native associate and received half the crop. This arrangement had certain advantages for both parties : the European received a good return on his investment, and the natives received protection, especially from the arbitrary exactions of the *caïds*. But the system, being unsupervised, placed a premium on abuse, and

<sup>66</sup> *Compte Rendu des Travaux du Congrès de l'Afrique du Nord*, 1909, Vol. II, p. 793 et seq.

merely came to add another complicating feature to an already involved situation.

Accordingly, the French found most of the land locked up in undefined group-areas, a good deal illicitly alienated to Europeans and claimed by various parties, and much under the curious half-way system of "association." But nothing was definite, and the only plain facts were the confusion and the abuses and the determined opposition of the natives to any diminution of their traditional holdings. The position was clearly impossible, and so France followed her Tunisian policy. By this, group-lands were defined, facilities given for converting collective into individual tenures, and provision made for the effective (if not nominal) alienation of such lands for purposes of settlement. It was a policy of three consecutive stages, the one leading to the other; but in the great majority of cases, never even reaching the first, owing to native opposition. Not till the middle of 1923 was there even an approximate census of the collective lands,<sup>67</sup> although fortunately there was more individual ownership in the coastal-regions, where economic development was more urgent than in the interior. The second stage, individualization, was not so difficult in theory, because the Tunisian code could be transplanted almost *en bloc*. By this, immatriculation, or registration on a modified Torrens basis, gave the native an unimpeachable claim to his land. All the uncertainty was removed, because, after due investigation, the granting of the title meant that no contrary claims could thereafter be admitted. The native thus obtained an asset on which he could raise loans. Such immatriculation commenced in June, 1915, but, as it is a slow process, by reason of the minute examination involved, it is still limited to the four settled regions. As was the experience in Tunisia, it is difficult to make the native see the advantages he obtains, because on the other side are the forces of tradition and the peculiar religious sanctions of the old system. Moreover, thought of the morrow, which is the most obvious advantage of immatriculation, means nothing to the Moroccan tribesman.<sup>68</sup>

The return of land available for cultivation was thus so slow that the Government sought other methods, the result being that a *dahir* of April, 1919, arranged for perpetual leases over lands not actually needed by the members of a given native group. Such lands could then be utilized for purposes of European settlement, but the device has not been very fruitful. The basic difficulty remains, and the complexities of tribal law make it one of the greatest obstacles to the development of Morocco. There is no land available for settlers,—a remarkable situation for what

<sup>67</sup> Map in *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1923, p. 291. See articles in *Renseignements Coloniaux*, Nov.-Dec. 1912 (Amar); 1922, p. 33; 1923, p. 277.

<sup>68</sup> Piquet, *Le Maroc* (1920), p. 322; report in Lyautey, 1916, *op. cit.*, p. 441.

is, as far as Europeans are concerned, a new country.<sup>69</sup> The Domain-lands of the State, which were made available from the first, were practically exhausted by 1925: the *habous*, offering little to colonization at the best, are surrounded by an almost impassable barrier of formalities: private lands realize inflated prices: and the collective tribal-lands, though clearly the most important source of land for settlement, are protected by a wall of native opposition.

Actual settlement in Morocco has therefore been sporadic, the more so since the rise of agricultural prices has induced the native to cultivate himself and to keep a tighter grip on his lands. The position was exasperating. The rich *tirs* of the Gharb and the Shawia, comparable to the black-earth regions of Russia, were given over to natives who left much land idle and utilized the remainder by primitive methods like wooden ploughs, sickle harvesting, no manure, no rotation of crops, winnowing in the wind, and the like. But, exasperating or not, the French could do little, and until the operation of the *dahir* of 1919 restricts the tribal lands to those needed for the actual sustenance of the tribesmen, the difficulty will remain.

The result has been that settlement in Morocco has been quite different from that in Algeria or Tunisia. The village-settlements and free-grants of the former, and the seignorial domains of the latter find no counterpart in Morocco, where the system is a limited one, based on sale and improvements. Apart from the sale of various isolated large blocks and the provision of small areas for *la petite culture* outside the towns, effort has centred on "middle colonization," in blocks of from 200 to 400 hectares. The shortage of land available has determined the system, which is one based on personal residence and rigid conditions. The problem has been, not to attract settlers as in Algeria, but to utilize a small area in the best possible manner.

Such official settlement commenced in 1916, and resulted in the settlement of 98,360 hectares by the close of 1924, mostly in the Gharb and the Shawia, the coastal regions first pacified. But the same difficulties have been encountered as in Algeria, and there is much alienation without effective settlement. In all, taking official and private schemes in the aggregate, Europeans possess 390,000 hectares of land in Morocco, but there is practically no small settlement,<sup>70</sup> and aggregation has gone on to such an extent that there are only 180 *bona fide* colonists on the land. "There are no colonists in Morocco," protested the deputy of Constantine

<sup>69</sup> *Revue de Géographie Marocaine*, Vol. V, 1926, p. 35 et seq.

<sup>70</sup> *Renseignements Coloniaux*, 1922, p. 96; *L'Afrique Française*, June, 1923, p. 295.

in 1923, and this statement was little exaggerated.<sup>71</sup> The French in Morocco are essentially town dwellers. Settlement, despite the facilities and safeguards of Lyautey's plans, has clearly failed. Indeed, under the conditions, any other result, would have been amazing. The perennial uncertainty in Morocco and the attitude of the natives in land-questions provided the unfavourable background: the more obvious advantages and the greater ease of city-life were powerful counter-attractions: and the lack of capital and of communications added to the already difficult situation: then, even if settled, the colonist was hampered by the lack of irrigation works and his consequent dependence on notoriously uncertain seasons: and finally, he could get no labour, because the natives were themselves cultivating more, and because the Rifs, formerly the best labour-supply, no longer came down from the mountains to work.

All of these conditions combined to place native agriculture in the foreground, and the problem seems rather to modernize the primitive methods employed by the natives than to provide a scope for European settlers. As it is, European exploitation has provided little return for a decade of effort on the part of the Government; and native agriculture, partly owing to insufficient aid from the Government, and more so to the easy fatalism of the tribesmen, remains as mediæval, patriarchal almost, as ever. In view of these facts, although the land-policy of the French has been a marked success, it is still dubious as to how far effort should be concentrated on regularizing the position of the collective tribal lands and on giving priority to schemes for improving native agriculture. Nevertheless, considering the difficulties, much has been accomplished, and with curiously little friction: and not the least gain has been in experimenting with, and eliminating, those policies which are not suited to the needs of the position.

## V. Conclusion

It is as yet too early to sum up the experience of the French in Morocco. Clearly, the transformation of the country in the early years of the Protectorate and the *morale* of the war-years were wonderful pieces of work; but, since then, the position has changed and other aspects have come to the fore, especially with regard to Lyautey's policy. His policy, in so far as it concerned the natives,—“the policy of association,”—has been successful, but only up to a certain point. His indirect rule and his tolerance of native customs left little to be desired; and native development on indigenous lines, especially with the Berber mountaineers, has been allowed to a degree quite unusual in French colonial history. And

<sup>71</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 15/3/23. A detailed account of the results for each year is in the article in *Revue de Géographie Marocain*, *op. cit.*, 1926, p. 41.



this has been a genuine development by the natives, especially in the South and the newly conquered outskirts. Sultan, viziers, *caïds*, *pachas*, and *cadis* all retained considerable functions, and there was a real dyarchy, even extended by the reforms of 1919 to the municipal sphere. But it is practically impossible to determine the degree of this co-operation. It is clear enough in the case of the *Grands Caïds* of the South and the small local areas, for there the issue could not have been easily decided otherwise: but it is practically insoluble in so far as provincial and national government are concerned. However, from the general tenor of Moroccan affairs, there is reason to believe that, as the years went on, Lyautey's hand became more rigid on the wider organizations, and a growing discrepancy emerged between his theory of 1914 and his later practice. Perhaps this increasing rigidity accounted for the comparative sterility of the years after 1920 and for the menacing nature of the Rif crisis in 1925.<sup>72</sup> Certainly, the previous policy, that political measures had to precede military, failed to meet the post-war situation, when Morocco seemed to demand an organization, both political and economic, *after* conquest, and not simultaneously with it. Lyautey himself perceived this early in 1925, but still over-estimated the efficacy of his earlier methods.

In all, then, Lyautey's plan of native government succeeded in its wider principles in so far as it meant development on native lines and with as much native co-operation as was politic. But practical exigencies came to mean a greater stress on the French Residents, and Morocco became a kind of fluctuating compromise between Nigeria and Java, in so far as native policy was concerned. Yet there was clearly more toleration of native customs and a greater variety of policies for the various sections of the people than in any other French colony: and there was a certain scope for the participation of the natives in Government, although probably not as great as the circumstances warranted. Beyond that, there was rebellion in at least a third of the land, hegemony in the southern quarter, something like local autonomy in the Berber regions, and the full native policy applied only in the coastal provinces. Even there, it is dubious if Lyautey's policy boiled down to anything more than what is known as "indirect rule" in England's tropical dependencies, tempered, however, by a Gallican *savoir-faire* which allowed a closer contact with the native. All in all, taking into account the time and the circumstances, it may be said that France's most successful native policy was not in Morocco, but with Galliéni in Madagascar, for, equilibrating the various advantages and disadvantages, the position of Madagascar

<sup>72</sup> For Rif crisis, see French report by Senator Dumont, *La Lutte contre Abd-el-Krim*, attached to the Budget-report of the Minister for War for 1927.

fifteen years ago was much more satisfactory than is that of Morocco to-day. Lyautey's policy, it is true, stands out in Northern Africa, where the French record has not been enviable; but, compared with French activities elsewhere and the policies of England since 1900, it is seen to be not so much *sui generis* as a rather successful compromise, but after all practically limited to the old *Blad el Makhzen* and the outer fringe of Berber country. Yet it must be remembered that the quietness and loyalty of the tribes within the Debdou-Agadir line are a striking testimony to the French work in Morocco: and, beyond that, the nature of the unsubdued mountaineers, with their juxtaposition of unruly tribes united only by hatred of the foreigner, rendered constructive work impossible. France brought peace and security to the plains and the Atlas foothills, and received in return loyalty. There was her greatest work.

In other fields, Lyautey's work admits of a clearer summary, for there the issue is a more tangible one. His social policy, with its medical and educational and civic aspects, was remarkably successful. So, too, was the first part of his economic policy. Communications have transformed Morocco, and the point is that the return from these is not so much at present as in the future, for which they are, so to speak, a gauge. On the other hand, there is much evidence to support the contention that certain of these projects, especially on the more spectacular side, have been so tenaciously adhered to as to warp the trend of general development. Industry has always been outside Lyautey's ken, and the public works connected with agriculture have been rather neglected.<sup>73</sup> European settlement is practically non-existent, native agriculture is little improved, pasture has not changed,—grave defects in a country of primary production.

Lyautey, in a word, troubled little, if at all, over these phases of development: his essential genius was in organizing the country after the original conquest. For the consolidation, a different type of administrator, less spectacular, less of a martinet, with a narrower vision even, was needed. Hence the significance of his replacement by M. Steeg in September, 1925,—a replacement that meant not so much the change from one man to another as from one system to another. Hereafter, Morocco called for the quiet economic organizer and the financial expert,—a more mediocre but useful type of person. Lyautey and the policy of grand gestures had won the prize: it was to be secured by consolidation. He had done much, but mainly in the period from 1912 to 1918. To obviate the drift that had taken place in governmental and economic matters after 1920, a new type of ruler was needed. With the proper

<sup>73</sup> Report of Department of Overseas Trade (Morocco, etc., 1924-1925), *op. cit.*, pp. 8, 24.

policy of consolidation, Morocco may yet fulfil the early predictions of Lyautey, but, as the economic events of 1921-1923 demonstrated and the psychology of the Rif revolt in 1925 affirmed, the cross-roads have not yet been passed. The work is half-finished, and the final structure will be a combination of the peculiar genius of "Lyautey Africanus" and the economic reformers of the Algerian school. Lyautey had the vision of the great colonial, and his native policy will continue. To this will be added the native agriculture which he did not sufficiently stress, and the *ensemble* will be the New Morocco. Beyond that, we may not at present go.

## CHAPTER XV

### SYRIA

**A**FTER the consolidation of her North African possessions, France was undoubtedly the leading Mediterranean Power; and, with the rise to importance of those possessions and the opening of the Suez link to the East, her policy became more and more Mediterranean. "The Mediterranean will always be the theatre of French activity," declared Gambetta forty years ago, and Flandin, in urging the cause of expansion in this ocean, said in 1921, that "the Mediterranean is the axis of French policy."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, so clear was this orientation that France had a Mediterranean policy before she had a colonial policy,—a policy linking Toulon, Algiers, and Bizerta, and needing only an eastern outpost, Alexandretta in Asia Minor, to make it complete.

The opportunity of rounding off that policy came with the War of 1914, when France could invest her interests in Syria with a new meaning. Those interests in Northern Asia Minor had always been outstanding. Every railway in Syria, except the Hedjaz line, was French: there were more French schools than any others there: French philanthropic work had always gone on: and the most important industry in Syria was that of the Lebanon silk-factories. Syria could thus be termed a region of special French interests, and the interests France wanted there far exceeded those she already had. In particular, she wanted Cilicia, because that province meant cotton and Alexandretta. As M. Briand summed the matter up in the Deputies in June, 1920, this was a matter of life and death for France's Mediterranean policy.<sup>2</sup> The whole of French expansion in North Africa depended on the safeguarding of her position in the Mediterranean, and, as matters then stood, this only narrowed itself down to Cilicia. "The gulf of Alexandretta is an important thing in the Mediterranean, *its possession is essential to the future of France!*" It was the end of the caravan-routes from the desert: the petrol pipeline from Mosul terminated there (and had not Tardieu said that petrol was the most important issue of the War?): it was the outlet of Aleppo

<sup>1</sup> Flandin in *Journal Officiel*, Depts., 6/4/21.

<sup>2</sup> Briand in *Ibid.*, Depts., 26/6/20,—an important pronouncement of policy.

and the centre draining the commerce of Persia and Upper Mesopotamia.<sup>3</sup> More, it was the acquisition that was needed to round off France's strategic domination of the Mediterranean. Economic and strategical reasons therefore demanded French control of Northern Asia Minor,—the safety of her North African Empire, and, as the Right and Centre insisted, the safety of mainland France admitted no other solution of the Mediterranean problem.

Allied agreements of 1916 therefore protected the traditional and secular interests of France in Syria. The Sykes-Picot agreement of May of that year gave her control of all Syria and Cilicia, with the *hinterland* to beyond the Tigris.<sup>4</sup> British troops evacuated both of these regions at the close of 1919, but French plans received a decided shock when the Emir Feisal rallied the Arabs to opposition. Feisal had become the champion of Arab nationalism, and an Arab body termed the Syrian General Congress had declared for independence in 1919 and again in 1920. Once accepting the fact of her permanent occupation there, then, France had no option but to reply to this challenge by taking decisive steps. A note of July, 1920,<sup>5</sup> demanded redress from Feisal for his "aggressive policy" in general and, in particular, for his enforcement of conscription and his refusal to accept the French mandate. Feisal, who had been hindering organization for six months and who had stopped the export of all cereals, responded to this by a general mobilization in Damascus. To this, there was only one reply; and, after the failure of new negotiations, General Gouraud marched on Damascus (July 25, 1920).

The Arabs were soon cleared out of the capital and Aleppo, and French priority in Syria could no longer be disputed. In the previous year, the device of a "mandate" had been decided upon. Annexations after the world-war had been rejected, and in their place was the idea that mandates were to be given over various ex-enemy lands which were to be administered for the good of the whole by the mandatory Power. As the French viewed this, according to Jonnart's summing-up in the Deputies in April, 1921, "the mandate is something new in international law. It does not confer on us a right of direct administration, it is not even a protectorate. It only gives us a right of aiding and advising a State recognized as independent and serving its apprenticeship of freedom."<sup>6</sup> The actual terms of the Syrian mandate were not definitely fixed until the London session of the Council of the League of Nations in July,

<sup>3</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 17/3/21, especially Lenail.

<sup>4</sup> Briand gave the French view of these events in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 28/3/20.

<sup>5</sup> In full with the documents in *L'Asie Française*, July–Oct. 1920, p. 300.

<sup>6</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 6/4/21.

1922, and were first published on August 12 of that year.<sup>7</sup> France was to provide an organic statute for Syria, and, in particular, was to safeguard local autonomies. She was to control external affairs, but was not to have any monopoly of the country's development. The privileges of foreigners were to continue as before, and there was to be no differential economic treatment for the subjects of the various Powers. The limitations on French effort were thus very real and immediate.

By this time, too, another factor had entered to cause discontent. The Treaty of Sèvres of August, 1920, had reduced the French sphere to 100,000 square kilometres, and the later London and Angora Agreements (October 1, 1921) still further limited her opportunities there. The two latter meant that Cilicia, the goal so eagerly desired, passed completely away from French control. Its cotton-fields had gone, Alexandretta remained under Turkish menaces. But this restriction of effort was not as unwelcome as it would have been a few years earlier, because, in the interim, the opposition to the Syrian mandate had steadily grown in France. The extreme Left had wanted evacuation from the first, and, even in 1920, M. Briand had been able to maintain French interests there only by openly defying his parliamentary opponents. If France was to have no special interest there, was she to be "the *gendarme* of the world?" it was asked. If, on the other hand, she was in Syria for her own interests, then she did not want such an extension of interests. "We have Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia," protested Ribot, "and that is quite enough for France at the moment."<sup>8</sup> And even those who held that, once pacification had taken place, France could not evacuate without diminishing her prestige in all Moslem countries, wanted to reduce the credits. Ribot's party, for instance, opposed the mandate on principle, but accepted small credits for the sake of France's wider Moslem policy. But the Government refused to budge, either in the face of opposition or half-hearted support, because it maintained that there were myriads of reasons why the French should remain in Syria. Beyond the wider question of philanthropy and the duty towards backward races, it adduced the specific interests of strategy and the railway. "We are in Syria," Lenail said specifically in the Deputies, "because France must hold this most important railway between Asia, Africa and Europe." Nevertheless, every successive list of credits was reduced, especially by the Senate, which was the stumbling-block to any aggressive French policy in Syria. At the close of 1921, for instance, when the movement for a *Syria irridenta* was gathering force, the Senate eagerly acquiesced in the Angora Agreement which lessened France's respon-

<sup>7</sup> *L'Asie Française*, June, 1923, p. 177.

<sup>8</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 7/12/21, 31/12/20, respectively.

sibilities in the Near East : being uninterested, they accepted any compromise that would end what was to them merely the tiring Cilician question.<sup>9</sup>

French opinion was thus very divided by the time the terms of the mandate became defined, and these differences played perhaps a greater part than any other factor in making the organization of Syria so difficult a task.<sup>10</sup> The experience of Morocco,—the old tale of divided councils so familiar to the historian of French colonization,—was being repeated here in a particularly accentuated form.

### I. French Policy

By 1920, however, it could be said that the French were definitely in Syria and were going to stay there. The question of organization therefore arose, and was complicated by the presence of various racial and religious antagonisms. Syria has less than three million people in its 60,000 square miles, but these are so divided in race and religion as almost to defy analysis. The racial diversity is most noticeable outwardly. The land is the cross-roads between the Black Sea and the Persian Gulf, between Arabia and Egypt, and the trouble is that, although the Arab-Semitic type dominates and the Arab language is the most widely spread, "nationality follows religion." There are at least thirty different religious societies in the land, having as the only feature in common a hatred of Turkey. Syria is "a kind of museum of religions," with Sunnites, Jews, dissident Moslems, and Christians all mixed together. After the French organized the land into five sections, they found that the Sunnite Mohammedans were in the ascendant in three States, the Moslem Druses in another, and the Christians in another, with strong fighting minorities in each case. Under these conditions any nationalism could only be a sectional movement. There was no real national unity. Moreover, the Turks had always refused to educate the Syrians from a political point of view, so that there was no effective native government (except in Lebanon which had been autonomous since 1861). Once the Turks evacuated the land, therefore, the machinery of government simply fell to pieces. That was the position France found,—a land of mutually fighting religions with no shadow of nationalism and little State organization.<sup>11</sup>

Under these conditions, the French had perforce to administer the land themselves until March, 1920. They tried to restore native officials

<sup>9</sup> See debate in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 30/12/21. For support, see Flandin in *Ibid.*, Senate, 6/4/21.

<sup>10</sup> Lenail in *Ibid.*, Deps., 31/12/22.

<sup>11</sup> *L'Asie Française*, Feb. 1920, p. 42; June, 1924, p. 240.

and native assemblies, but the process of filling the gap was of necessity a slow one. By 1920, however, it was felt that administrative control could replace a direct administration, and that the French could turn to the wider question of national organization. It was obvious that no governmental body could be created for Syria as a whole: the existence of the many minorities precluded any such centralization. There had to be a system of local autonomy on a regional basis, and it was in this direction that France moved in creating the four States of September, 1920. Syria was only a geographical expression, and economic and political considerations joined in demanding such a regional solution of the difficulty.

Gouraud, the French High Commissioner, therefore set up four autonomous States (Aleppo, Damascus, Lebanon, and the State of the Alaouites) in the latter part of 1920, and finalized this federal idea by the constitution proclaimed at Aleppo in June, 1922.<sup>12</sup> Previously to this, Lebanon had been separated from the rest of the Syrian organization. This hemmed-in little country was so traditionally independent and so much a Christian *enclave* that it could not readily be absorbed in the general Syrian structure. Its independence was therefore continued, and it was provided with a Chamber elected by universal suffrage,—the only one at that time in the Near East. No question interesting Lebanon was to be decided without coming before this Council, all legislation had to be submitted to it, and all fiscal charges meet with its approval. But, on the usual French model, the High Commissioner could provide for “the indispensable charges” above the heads of its members. Beyond this restriction, however, the Lebanon retained its genuine autonomy.<sup>13</sup> For the rest of Syria there was to be a Federation. The remaining three States were to form what was known as “the Federation of Autonomous States in Syria.” A federal organization was to be the spokesman of French interests, although all residuary power was to remain with the individual States. The Councils of Government in each State were to elect five members to sit in a Federal Council, and this Federal Council in turn was to choose a President or executive head. Finances, public works, and civil services were to be ministerial departments, and the Federal Council could legislate on most economic matters. The customs, the other indirect taxes, and ultimately certain tax-receipts handed over by the States were to form the federal budget, which was to concern itself chiefly with matters of general economic development. The aim of this system was clearly to centralize the existing organization and to provide for a more easily executed French control. In the preceding

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, April, 1923, pp. 127–129.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, June, 1922, p. 244.



two years, French relationships with the Mohammedan world had improved: this Syrian centralization and the interference with the privileged position of the Lebanon were the first-fruits of that improvement, and were so construed by the parties interested.

That the trend was at once perceived by the Syrians was evident by the secessionist movement from that time onwards. All through 1921 the people had been sullenly passive and kept in order only by military force. Next year the discontent became more openly expressed. The previously localized riots now spread over the whole country, especially after the depreciation of the currency and the attempts to aid French trade. The agitation, though quieter, continued into 1923, and the Syrians resolutely opposed the division of their land into five segments, claiming that this effectively prohibited the emergence of a national spirit. As a concession to their demands for a constitutional government, Gouraud's successor, General Weygand, set up representative Councils in each of the States of the federation (August–September, 1923).<sup>14</sup> These had been contemplated in the federal scheme of the previous year, but the difficulties of introducing the suffrage to a politically uneducated community had hitherto held back the French. Hereafter, however, they were to be elected by universal suffrage on a population-basis, special measures being taken to see that religious minorities secured adequate expression. Their powers were to duplicate those of the Lebanon Council, and, in particular, the dyarchical arrangement whereby "essential expenses" were outside the State's control was extended to these States. As in the Lebanon, however, no tax could be created or enlarged without a favourable vote of the Council. This budgetary activity, as in the French colonies proper, was the main function of the new bodies. In legislation they were confined to an advisory rôle, and, at every stage in the new constitution, the French inserted adequate—indeed, over-elaborate—precautions to prevent surprises or to keep the councillors away from a world of theory. Chief amongst these precautionary measures were the powers of the High Commissioner to approve all fiscal arrangements, to annul any deliberation of the Council on administrative matters, and to veto any of its proposals whatsoever. The controlling power of the executive is thus complete, and, if it so wills, the councils from the outset can be reduced to mere bodies of mummers. The Council's powers really reduced themselves to advice on most matters, a right of decisions on a few, a voting of the non-essential expenses, and the right to be consulted before new taxes were imposed. But the Government's power of veto and of general interference could nullify all of these. The Council *might* be a

<sup>14</sup> Full text in supplement to *L'Asie Française*, Nov. 1923, p. 235.

body exercising these powers : it would be what the executive allowed it to be.

The French view-point was that they were not sufficiently established in Syria to risk hazardous legislative experiments, even had such a tendency at all characterized their colonial policy : and, secondly, that conditions in Syria,—a land of totally ignorant peasants and a self-seeking landlord-class,—were not such as to allow anything like a sovereign Assembly. The Syrians, it was held, could understand uniformly administered power but not constitutional liberty. However this might be (and it would appear from the elections that the French were in many ways justified in their point of view), the Syrians, especially in the towns, bitterly opposed the new constitution, because the powers it gave were so few as to amount almost to a mockery. Moreover, it stereotyped the federal *régime*, which was most unpopular as an attempt to weaken the Syrians by dividing them. Although they had never had any nationality, they resented any attempts against that artificial nationality in the existence of which they liked to delude themselves, but which, localists to the core as they were, they did not really want. They viewed nationality as a cause for agitation rather than as something to be realized in practice. But, as a grievance, it was real enough, especially when to it there was added the sectional opposition of the urban middle classes,—the commercialists who thought that the decrees of 1923 unduly favoured the despised rural dwellers.

The first elections in October, 1923, clearly showed this balance of forces. The most obvious fact was that the rural masses stood firm for France, because their agricultural position was being steadily improved. The result was viewed in France as eminently satisfactory, especially because of the failure of the British in the Palestine elections, the grave check in Iraq, and the failure to register as many votes in Egypt as in Syria. The State of Damascus, however, remained as ever the centre of dissidence. Only half of the people on the electoral rolls there voted, and there was successful passive resistance in every part of the State, both rural and urban, and also in the towns of Aleppo.<sup>15</sup>

These features, both good and bad, clarified the issue for France. Lebanon, if its peculiar local liberties were safeguarded, could be counted upon as standing for France, and the adjacent territory of the Alaouites, which had enjoyed no rights at all under the Turks and where the peasants were usually simpler and more illiterate than elsewhere, presented no difficulties. It was the two inner States of Aleppo and Damascus that refused to co-operate, and here that the danger lay. Before there could be any further progress, therefore, the opposition of these two States had

<sup>15</sup> Analysis by Froidevaux in *Idid.*, Jan. 1924, p. 8 *et seq.*

to be met. But they wanted nothing less than a constitutional government and a scope for their Syrian nationalism. That is, they desired a unitary State and a responsible parliament. The French, because it was evident that the federal system was cracking, gradually came round to this point of view. Lebanon and the land of the Alaouites were moving in the direction of untrammelled independence, and the other two States were drifting together, so much so that nothing short of permanent force could stop them.

Accepting the inevitable, therefore, Weygand in June, 1924, promised the suppression of the federal *régime*.<sup>16</sup> A decree of December 5 of that year carried out this promise and dissolved the Federation of 1922.<sup>17</sup> Hereafter, the State of the Alaouites was to be fully autonomous, the Lebanon and the land of the Druses were to go on as before, and Damascus and Aleppo were to be combined in one State with a responsible parliament. What localism there was after this was to be natural, and not, as the system of 1922 had been, artificial. The inexorable force of circumstances had thus determined the policy France was to pursue in Syria, and Gouraud's system, unable to meet the facts, had to go root-and-branch. At this stage, the French seemed to have settled the Governmental difficulties for the time, although the sudden recall of the successful Weygand—and for reasons quite unconnected with Syria<sup>18</sup>—certainly boded ill for the success of his experiment. The organization was there at the close of 1924, and the people, given a tactful administration, were not indisposed to accept it, since it had been shaped in accordance with their desires. Everything depended on the sympathetic tact of the administration, and it could fairly be said that the prospects were as much there for success as for failure.

## II. Economic Development

The question of Syria's economic possibilities played a large part in France's eagerness for the mandates. Those who wanted the mandate viewed the land as a rich path of passage and a desirable prize in itself,—almost as a land of milk and honey. Over against these were the pessimists. In the Senate in July, 1920, for instance, Bernard called it “a heap of inhospitable stones and sterile burning soil,” and Bompard said that Syria “has a very slight economic value.” The truth is partly midway between these two points of view. Syria is at present a comparatively poor agricultural land, little organized and sparsely peopled.

<sup>16</sup> Speech in *L'Asie Française*, Sept.-Oct. 1924, p. 356. For the position of the Alaouites, see Barrès in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 16/11/23.

<sup>17</sup> In *Rapport sur la Situation de la Syrie et du Liban*, 1924 (1926), p. 9.

<sup>18</sup> *L'Asie Française*, Dec. 1924, p. 424.

There are possibilities there, it must be admitted, but these require time and development.

The population is much smaller than was formerly supposed, the first Census of 1923 placing it at less than 2,140,000.<sup>19</sup> The land itself is relatively poor, and only 28 per cent. of its surface is cultivable. It has no minerals or coal, and is almost entirely a cereal country. Its greatest product is a million tons of wheat a year, but the present population needs this much for its sustenance. French experts, however,—Huvelin, for instance,—hold that this present total may be at least trebled, given material and juridical security. The land is there waiting: its exploitation depends primarily on the provision of favourable conditions. But its other crops are unimportant (it was Cilicia that was to have produced two-thirds of France's cotton needs, and Cilicia is no longer French!), and its flocks and herds are weak and declining. It is estimated that the total rural products can amount to 23½ million sovereigns in pre-war values,<sup>20</sup> but there is a good deal of hazard in this, and, even if realizable, the total amount is, after all, insignificant as compared with the trouble France has gone to in Syria.

On the industrial side, too, there is little development. The only possible secondary industries are in transforming agricultural products, but the silk-industry is practically extinct, and cloth-manufacturing cannot for long stand against European competition unless it is industrialized. At present, about an eighth of the people are engaged in industry, but all is on a rudimentary scale, and there are not a hundred establishments in the whole land that could properly be termed "industrial."

The trouble is that, both in the towns and the country districts, there has never been any security. Even when the land was at peace, there was never that trust without which progress is impossible. The Turkish political *régime* and the social system alike hindered advance, and, in addition, stamped the people with a certain supinely fatalistic type of psychology. They not only prevented progress in itself; what was far worse, they eradicated the spirit of progress. It is needless to specialize: the causes of backwardness were all jumbled together in one confused mass,—the *latifundia* system, the quasi-serfdom of the tenants, usury, insecurity of goods and person, the grip of exploiters, the absence of roads or irrigation, the scarcity of labour, and so on until the compiler wonders how even existence was possible under such conditions. In a

<sup>19</sup> In *Ibid.*, Nov. 1923, p. 416. See Bernard in *Annales de Géographie*, 15/1/24.

<sup>20</sup> Analysis in Huvelin, *Que Vaut la Syrie ?* (1921), pp. 8-10; Ruppin, *La Syrie Economique* (1917), p. 34 *et seq.*

word, the land was not at peace with itself. The Turks governed and, refusing to take the Syrians into their confidence, were interested neither in efficiency nor progress. Within the land, a class of feudal landlords ground down the uneducated and only half-free peasantry, and the townsmen lived by exploiting the country-dwellers.<sup>21</sup>

The French were therefore confronted by the problem of modernizing the entire economic life of a people who were so accustomed to subservience that they would accept any yoke as long as it was justified by ancestral tradition. But, once France started her programme of reform, she was confronted by three factors,—the obscurity bequeathed her by the Turkish *régime*; the shortage of labour; and the innate opposition of the people to reform of any kind,—and it is difficult to say which of these three factors was the worst.

The illogicalities and corruptions of the anterior *régime* were certainly the most immediate, however, and France set to work to infuse some kind of order into the life of the people. Material tranquillity and moral confidence were the two primary needs. Nothing could be done unless people felt safe: if this confidence were not there, life merely reduced itself to a process of survival. The French therefore taught the Syrians, especially in the country districts, that a Government did not of necessity mean capricious extortion. By emphasizing such matters as re-afforestation, public works, and irrigation, they demonstrated their theory that a Government had duties as well as rights of taxation, and this ocular proof did more with a credulous peasantry—a peasantry who believed what they themselves could see—than a multitude of organic constitutions or proclamations of rights. Material improvement was what they wanted, and this was what the French gave them,—quite as much, it must be admitted, with the idea of raising a counter-element to the opposition of the townsmen as for the abstract improvement of the Syrian peasants, but none the less effective because of this ulterior motive.

The first specific task was land-legislation, because this was at the basis of Syrian life. The position in this connection was basically simple, though difficult of solution.<sup>22</sup> Most of Syria was grouped into large landed-estates or *latifundia*, held by titles of doubtful legality and in few cases really defined. The French had two tasks: they had to define every man's rights (and incidentally let the State know where it stood, as in Morocco), and they had to prevent usurpations and thus indirectly foster the emergence of a class of small peasant-proprietors. There had been a State register in the land for fifty years, and, in the face of this

<sup>21</sup> Huvelin, *op. cit.*, p. 15—report of a Mission of 1919.

<sup>22</sup> Articles in *L'Asie Française*, Jan.-Feb. 1923, p. 22; July-Aug. 1924, p. 280.

strongly planted Moslem institution, France had to continue the existing system and yet contrive to make it efficient. Curiously enough, though this was perhaps the fundamental part of Syrian organization on the economic side, France did not obtain uniform control of land-matters until June, 1923, although it is inconceivable how there could have been a delay for so long.

This simplification of the land position is but a stage in the direction of the ultimate reform, as has been seen. The real evil is the existence of an idle landlord class who let out their lands to serfs and, charging 400 per cent. on capital advance, kept these serfs in economic slavery.<sup>22</sup> As the only other provision for credit in an essentially agricultural land was a Turkish State Bank that had made no more than 45,000 advances to 1914, the cultivators had no alternative other than submitting to this robbery: their past debts and their peculiar attachment to their ancestral land kept them there: and an easy-going fatalism that is the most marked trait in the Syrian rural character made efforts to secure a change out of the question. With taxes that were "farmed" and a Government that spoke for the landlords, the tenant was in a hopeless position. France hopes to remedy this, and to extend to all of Syria the system evolved by the Lebanon natives,—a small-property system in the hands of natives who are said to be so assiduous that they can make even the rocks fertile! But the fatalistic immobility of the peasantry in the North would seem to prevent such an extension, for any real change, however aided from outside, must be self-help in some form or other. The Syrian cultivator must, by a gradual educative process, be introduced to the idea of beneficent change and a salutary spirit of endeavour. Then, when the psychological difficulty is overcome, there remains the question of finance. Even if the cultivators should acquire the desire to progress, they have no means of fulfilling it; and France, with the credits available for Syria being continually diminished by Parliament, cannot afford funds for such intangible schemes of rural improvement. Yet, unless agricultural credit is organized in Syria on the Egyptian model, the land will not progress, and, even given a quietness on the part of the people, the French mandate will not be a success. Agricultural education and credit-facilities are needed to banish the forces of ignorance and usury: and *there*, once the frothy political grievances have been settled, lies the real Syrian problem.

Equally distracting is the French difficulty in regard to population. The population of Syria is much less than was previously supposed and is very unevenly distributed. Owing to the inordinate concentration in the urban districts, there are scarcely enough *fellahs* to till the land

<sup>22</sup> E. Achard, "Notes sur la Syrie," in *L'Asie Française*, 1922, p. 98 *et seq.*

actually under cultivation, and none at all available for the breaking of those new lands which are to treble the agricultural production of Syria. The Bedouins will not settle, the townsmen refuse to go back to the country, and the much-lauded project of enticing back some of the 500,000 Syrians abroad fails, because the immigrants, whose position cannot be any worse in their new lands, have no desire to return to a war-ridden Syria, and, even if they did so, they were town-dwellers in the first place.<sup>24</sup>

In short, Syria has everything to make it stagnant, and lacks that pre-requisite for reforms,—the spirit of trust in the French. With that, the schemes of the mandatory Power may have had some chance of converting themselves into practice: without it, the countrymen vegetate as before, and the town-dwellers resort to non-co-operation in the bazaars. The whole land needs modernization and industrialization, yet any reform is at once *tabooed*, because associated with the French invaders. Under these conditions, beneficent change is impossible. The land is not suited for industry, yet the townsmen dominate: it must be agricultural, and yet the farmers will not change. The dilemma is complete. Syria stagnates, and the French are thwarted.

### III. Conclusion

There is no doubt about the extent of the French failure in Syria. They thought to make it a second Morocco, they have succeeded in making it a second Rif. In a land where everything depended on the co-operation of the natives, the natives have been alienated. Up to 1923,<sup>25</sup> it could have been said that the French had at least won over the farming classes, and that they were, after all, the basis of the community. But the farming classes of the State of Damascus had never been conciliated in this way, and, in the disturbances of 1924, the ominous feature was that the old cleavage between country and town dwellers was for the nonce bridged, and all combined. The efficacy of the French scheme of agricultural improvement seemed to have lost its force.

Weygand's successor, General Sarrail, coming at the moment when conciliation was more than ever the primary *desideratum*, moved in exactly the opposite direction. By attacking local liberties, he estranged even the Lebanese, the most Francophile of the natives. The whole land rose, and, in the second half of 1925, practically all of Syria was

<sup>24</sup> Huvelin Report (1921), *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>25</sup> Up to this date the achievements are in *Rapport sur la Situation de la Syrie et du Liban*, 1924 (1926), p. 60 et seq., or *Compte Rendu du Congrès français de la Syrie* (Chamber of Commerce of Marseilles, 1919). A good article is by "Testis" in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15/3/21, 1/3/21.

abandoned by the French except Damascus, Lebanon, and Beyrout. The rebel leaders proclaimed a National Government, Damascus was needlessly bombarded by the French (October), Sarraïl was ignominiously recalled, and a civil High Commissioner, M. de Jouvenel, sent out. Constitutions were promised as pacification progressed, but clearly the French work had broken down.

France failed, because she antagonized the town-dwellers and then, almost inconceivably foolish though such a procedure was, alienated her former supporters, the rural producers. This she could only accomplish by a studious disregard of their interests. The constitutional experiments up to 1924 may have had some justification, because the problem was in many ways unique and singularly complex: but the events of 1925 read like a satirist's parody on a policy. At present, therefore, France rests on the Syrian coast, unpopular and unwanted: and Syria remains an annual charge on French finances, equally unpopular and unwanted. The old dreams of "Alexandretta and Cilician cotton" and "rounding-off Mediterranean dominion" have all gone: and the French Parliament cannot see beyond its melancholy record of failures, the purblind alienation of even the Lebanese and Druses, and the growing cost of the Syrian adventure. Morocco produced something for the sacrifice, but Syria seems in French eyes to be a new Mexico. Now that the petrol and cotton *motifs* have gone, the land offers nothing except the dubious strategic advantages, which were always more artificial than real. Syria therefore remains a disastrous hazard for France, and certainly none of the reforms that usually accompany French colonial efforts have been possible there,—neither the tariff-assimilation of the colonies proper, nor the *mise en valeur* of the protectorates, nor even the legal and social reforms of Morocco. In every way, even in the direction of raising the serfs as a new farming class against the landlords, Syria remains a confessed failure. As an experiment in colonization, it is more than void: it is distinctly weakening to France's position in her other Mohammedan lands along the Mediterranean littoral—and therein, after all, is the real significance of France's Syrian policy.



## CHAPTER XVI

### THE FRENCH EMPIRE SINCE 1914.

#### I. The Effect of the War of 1914-1918

COMPETENT observers of all shades of opinion agree in emphasizing the fundamental importance of the War of 1914-1918 on French colonization. Up to then, colonization had been drifting since the period of African conquest in the nineties. The French had conquered a vast Empire of 10½ million square kilometres, but, when the conquest was finally over in Mauretania and Wadai, nobody knew what to do. France disliked the task of organizing her new lands and could not for the moment see of what use they were going to be to her. The part that appealed to her was the conquest and such magnificent gestures as the burial of the conqueror of Wadai, Colonel Moll, in the walls of the Invalides. But, beyond this, the colonial scandals in the Congo and Indo-China sickened the public taste and reawakened that anti-colonial feeling that had been nascent since Ferry's time. The colonies were a burden, their organization an unprofitable expense, and their existence, if anything, an additional element of weakness to the French State. Hence came the period of colonial lethargy after 1905 and the frequent reversals of policy in the years immediately preceding the War. Hence, too, the vagueness of most Frenchmen at home on colonial questions. It was said that the chief French thought on the colonies was either in terms of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's romance or Toqué's sombre tragedy of the Congo. There was always this mixed feeling, always the combination of good and evil, always the feeling that the lands down there produced such intangible complaints as "colonial amnesia," "bush nostalgia," and the like. In the years before 1914, for instance, the Janus-nature of colonization had its interpreters in Loti and Fabre, the romanticist and the stark realist. Outside of this blurred image, "this story of public sentiment," stood only the specialists, and those who were not the henchmen of the *bureaux* were separated from the mass of Frenchmen by the technical nature of their work and were not very powerful in affecting policy, because they could not elevate their problem to the status of a political issue and, if they became too articulate, were condemned to the sanctity of moderation by the gift of the red ribbon or rosette of official beatitude.

It needed the War to transmute this vagueness into a sense of colonial realities. The War visibly brought the facts of colonial existence home to the metropolitan Frenchmen: they realized for the first time that the colonies, expensive though they were, might conceivably be of use to the mother-country,—that they might strengthen instead of weaken. Hitherto, looking at the French domain sprawled over the world-map which vied with a Bottin in ornamenting his *café*, the Frenchman had seen only an enormous territorial frontier, along the whole of which France could be attacked. Now, on the other hand, he saw each of these far-flung territories definitely aiding France, alike in men and money and products. He realized the individuality of the various French possessions and saw how each could produce something that France needed. The colonies had changed from a sandy desert mopping up French blood and French capital and leaving little trace, into a vast cornucopia, giving out instead of absorbing.

First came the overseas troops, muster on muster until they were 1,918,000 strong, and 680,000 of them actual combatants. Colonials were actually in France in large numbers, and the stay-at-home Frenchman saw, as it were, a living kaleidoscope of the Empire in his streets. Arabs and Berbers and Tunisians, negroes and Moors and Somalis, Hovas and Sakalavas and Betsileos, Annamites and Pacific-Islanders and creoles of the Old Colonies were all there, and the Empire had at one stroke been vitalized. It was "*une organisation qui vive*," as much a part of France as the outer limbs of the body. The dimly realized abstractions had become realities of flesh-and-blood, and a France, overwrought with war emotions, was thrilled with the interest of it all. It is difficult to reconstruct this emotional intensity, or to feel how France gasped and quivered before this sight of her new-felt colonies. The presence of the scarred Bambaras and the immobile Arabs, side by side with the coppery Malagasians and the *capote*-hidden *tirailleurs* from Indo-China, with perchance a prognathous Melanesian or a tawny Tahitian from Mangin's brigade, was a fine sight: but it was more,—it symbolized the *living* nature of French colonization.<sup>1</sup> The two million colonials on French soil thus exercised an influence out of all proportion to their military worth: indeed, even remembering Douaumont and Verdun, it may be said that their military performances were the least of their services. They created a new French attitude of mind, and made possible a unified colonial policy. Their work was as propagandists rather than wielders of bayonets, for French colonialism was really brought home to the metropolis in these years.

<sup>1</sup> C. Regismanset, *Questions Coloniales* (1923), Vol. I, p. 51. For military effort. see Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, p. 39.

After the original interpretation of the colonies' share in the War in emotional terms came a more reasoned, but an equally telling, economic view-point. France had had men from the colonies, but her needs gradually changed until she wanted raw materials more than anything else. The colonies, therefore, gave a milliard of francs in money and, excluding North Africa, 2½ million tons of products. That is, colonial enterprise demonstrated beyond the possibility of doubt that it could definitely strengthen continental France,—and more, that colonization could *pay*. It was a sound financial proposition.<sup>2</sup>

By 1918, then, it could truthfully be said that, if there was not already a completely new colonial orientation, all of the materials, especially the frame of mind, needed for that new orientation were in process of being assembled. The French mind had realized the colonies, and the colonial question had at last become a national one. Instead of being a neglected matter dealt with by a few governmental *bureaux*, it had become linked up with the destinies of France, strengthening or weakening France as it was strong or weak. This concept, that France was directly affected by the position of her colonies, was something quite new, because hitherto the view-point had been that the colonies meant payment—always payment, with an incommensurate return.

Next, the War had awakened a new kind of imperialism. It was not only that France, under the seduction of Mangin's jugglery with numbers, dreamed of the possibilities of drawing tens of millions of men from her hitherto-untouched colonial reservoirs: the real significance lay far deeper,—that France had incorporated the colonies in her life and now saw in them a France, even if a different France, outside France.

This realization necessitated a plan of organization and development. The easy *tracasserie* and general atrophy of the pre-war stage could no longer be applied to the New Empire. The colonies had been galvanized into a coherent life and associated with the mother-country: therefore, there had to be a uniform and progressive policy for them in the reconstruction after the War. The War, in this sense, created a colonial policy. "I said," proclaimed Simon, the Minister of the Colonies in September, 1919, "that the colonial empire of France was built without a regular plan, and almost at the hazard of events, or even at the caprice of certain audacious individuals who simply handed the country the *fait accompli*."<sup>3</sup> All of this ill-advised and haphazard empiricism had to go. "The first lesson of the War," added Simon, "was to show that a regular plan was necessary,"—and this realization in itself justified the

<sup>2</sup> Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Simon in *Journal Officiel*, 18/9/19, or see L. Hubert, *Une Politique Coloniale* (1918), p. 4.

claim that the War was the pivotal point of French colonial theory and practice.

Moreover, the War had shown that this colonial plan of necessity had to be primarily economic. The fundamental importance of the colonies had been in their grains and oils and other food-stuffs and raw goods, and it was in this direction that development had to go on. "We must now be able to count on the economic solidarity of our colonies as we have hitherto counted on their military solidarity." That is, schemes of colonial policy were hereafter not so much concerned with the earlier questions of administrative decentralization or with legal status so much as crops and finance and labour-supplies. The various elements in the colonial syllogism had obtained different values, and, with the premises thus altered, the result was far different. It was a new colonial problem that confronted France in 1919, and that is why the sterile disputes of the period from 1905 to 1914 seem so very distant, and almost inconceivable, as applied to the post-war colonies.

Lastly, another element had received a new stress. The rise of the theory of association since 1900 had involved a greater emphasis on the moral values of colonization, but this had largely been discounted by the suffering of the Algerians and Indo-Chinese and by the Congo atrocities, and had not been a serious force in colonization, save in the short-lived emotional disgust after the Toqué-Gaud case in 1905. The rallying of the natives to France, however, placed the question of French responsibility to them on a new plane, especially after Germany was deprived of her overseas possessions on the ground of "colonial unworthiness." That very phrase implied a moral value in colonization, and, according to the French school of theorists under Sarraut and Simon, this moral value was quite as important as the economic. Even if it was a little difficult to consider the materialistic France of the post-war years as influenced by this factor in itself, there was the faintly enunciated, but very telling, argument that henceforth the French in the colonies had to depend on the natives. The War had shown that colonization was mainly economic and that France absolutely needed colonial products: facts also demonstrated that, the position of the French Empire being what it is, these products could only be forthcoming under conditions of native production, and the natives would not produce to the limits of their capacities unless they wanted to. A liberal native policy was therefore a sound economic proposition.<sup>4</sup> As a result of both of these arguments, humanitarian and coldly economic, France turned to a new consideration of native policies.

The war-years thus changed the nature of the French outlook towards

<sup>4</sup> Hubert in *Journal Officiel*, Senate, 10/7/18.

colonies. They showed France the importance and extent of her colonial wealth, both human and material: they showed the intrinsic strength of the overseas colonies: they showed the potentialities still dormant there and the profitable nature of developing them: they showed the absolute need of a coherent plan and a vigorous policy in furthering this development: they showed that any such plan had to be of necessity both economic and moral: and they revealed the sudden birth of the New French Empire, with all of its new problems and new duties and new responsibilities. The colonial question had changed in every way, both in itself and in the way in which the French regarded it; and it seemed impossible for the pre-war lethargy to come back again. The colonial problem, in one phrase, had at last merged with the wider national problem, and as such, had to be solved or shelved. But hereafter it could not idly be put aside unless the French paid the price in added national weakness,—and this realization, after all, was the greatest gain France made in the colonial field during the War.<sup>5</sup>

## II. The Economic Problem

After the War had brought home to France the real nature of her colonial empire, practical steps had to be taken to realize the possibilities offered by the colonies and by the changed metropolitan outlook. Inasmuch as the problem had become national, it meant that the individual colonies had to be strengthened and also that they had to produce more and more for the benefit of France. Hence, a *mise en valeur* of the whole French Empire became a primary need, and both policy and necessity determined that any such progress had to be on the basis of native collaboration.

Taking stock of their existing position, the most obvious feature, despite the frantic effort of the War, was how fruitless and weak the work of the past had been. Despite the extreme protectionist system in force in most of the French colonies, France commanded only 53 per cent. of the colonial exports and 54 per cent. of their imports in 1913, the proportions changing to 21 per cent. and 48 per cent. in 1920. The enjoyment of half their exports and a quarter of their imports, and the maintenance of the former only by the restrictions on export which were in force until February, 1921, could not be termed a good showing. Less than an eighth of the nation's total trade came from the colonies, and, even in the favoured Algeria, development was slow, if it was taking place at all.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, April, 1922, p. 189.

<sup>6</sup> See analysis in *Le Monde Colonial Illustré*, Dec. 1926, p. 274, and compare Girault (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 168, to show lack of development.

On the other hand, it was readily evident that the position of colonial trade *might* become increasingly important. The colonies had suffered from metropolitan neglect, from the multitude of changing policies, and from the dead-weight of tariff-assimilation: and yet had come to absorb 12 per cent. of the nation's trade. If this result could be achieved under the unfavourable conditions hitherto existing, and without much emphasis on the new crops for which the various colonies were adapted, what might not the result be, it was asked, if colonial production were definitely systematized, and aided? An official investigation of 1917 positively declared that the output of the colonies could at least be doubled and that this retarded development was due, not to themselves, but to the paucity and misdirected nature of French aid. The cotton and cereals and wool and minerals that France needed so badly were all there, and could be produced if the conditions were satisfactory. The onus of development was thus thrown on the French themselves, and it was no longer doubted that the colonies could become both a centre for provisioning France with food and raw materials, and a huge market for the sale of her manufactured goods.

The argument, briefly put, developed through several successive stages. The colonies do not trade with France as they should do,—the official statistics amply demonstrated that point: that they *could* trade with France was evident from the undeveloped nature of their resources and the reports of several commissions on the handicaps hitherto existing: and lastly came the argument that, for reasons of national development, they *had* to trade with France, and to an ever-increasing degree. The last stage in the argument was the new one, because, before the War, few would have argued that France's national safety depended in part on colonial trade,—yet that is what the new contention amounted to. A Report of the National Association for Economic Expansion in 1921 thus stated definitely that “the essential basis of our return to normal economic conditions is the integral *mise en valeur* of our colonies.”<sup>7</sup> And it was this view that gradually found official existence.

“To live in our domain on the products of that domain” had become the dominant formula. To do this, France resolved to widen the basis of her policy of tariff-assimilation and so change it as to allow colonial strength as well as metropolitan. The British and Italian idea of Imperial Preference was to be carried to its furthest logical implication,—not, as Sarraut affirmed, to the extent of creating an economic world within a world and thus dying of economic anæmia, but at least to the degree

<sup>7</sup> In Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, p. 73.

of strengthening both France and the colonies in one co-ordinated structure, competing against other nations.

France had had an increasingly adverse trade-balance in the years after 1913 and therefore had to obtain colonial trade to correct her position. Her 55 million colonists and her 12 milliards of colonial trade (1921) were too important an element in national prosperity to be neglected any longer: therefore, various projects for a *mise en valeur* were formulated to make them as productive as possible.

This point of view had been quietly emerging for some time. Those pre-war reformers who wanted "tariff personality" for the respective colonies had been groping in this direction, and Camille Guy, an African Governor and well-known publicist, had specifically urged a *mise en valeur* as early as 1900.<sup>8</sup> He wanted a new *Pacte Colonial*, one benefiting both sides and securing a genuine economic solidarity between France and the colonies, and claimed that it was economically, and not administratively, that the colonies were prolongations of France. This feeling grew throughout the war-years, although it was realized that the efforts of the various councils and reform-bodies before the War, by over-emphasizing colonial individuality, had been going too far in the direction of decentralization and had almost viewed the problem as a series of local desires rather than as a unitary matter of national urgency.

The first important step was the war-organization itself. Under the strain of war-conditions, a considerable degree of administrative and economic grouping had been introduced, the idea being to secure increased efficiency. Local units, in Africa and Oceania, for instance, were combined, and the emphasis came to be on such natural federations and intensive production as would mean the maximum efficiency. This meant that the situation was neither as isolated nor as unduly diffuse as it had hitherto been. The machinery, in a word, was emerging for the post-war schemes. After Lyautey had demonstrated in Morocco that reconstruction was the real objective of hostilities, events moved still more rapidly. Vivien du Streel, in *Le Rôle des Colonies dans l'Après-Guerre*, showed in 1916 that the colonies could become the principal provider of raw materials and the main buyer of finished goods, and André Maginot, when Minister of the Colonies, gave an official *imprimatur* to this view by the economic *cahiers* he had drawn up for each colony. He called a Colonial Conference of experts to determine the means whereby the future economic development of the colonies could be co-ordinated with that of France: and his Conference proved beyond doubt that production could at once be greatly increased.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> In *La Mise en Valeur de notre Domaine Coloniale*.

<sup>9</sup> Regismanet (1923), *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 71-77.

The Ribot Cabinet fell, and with it the details of the Maginot scheme, but the general struggle went on, although not much could be done before hostilities were over. In July, 1918, for instance, Flandin caused an interpellation in the Senate, on the subject of increased colonial production, but only fifteen senators thought the matter important enough to listen to!<sup>10</sup> Despite this apathy, the Minister of Colonies for the time being, Henri Simon, propounded a scheme for the economic regeneration of the colonies, and thus kept breath in the official project.

The first real awakening came with the realization that the main economic struggle in world-affairs was commencing *after* the War. The commencement of the post-war crisis gave point to this assertion, the result being that when Lucien Hubert, a former budget-reporter, again introduced the matter to the Senate, it was at once emphatically taken up. The Hubert interpellation of February 19 and 27, 1920, was the most important colonial debate for thirty years, and certainly the most fruitful one since Ferry's time.<sup>11</sup> Hubert, supported by the new colonial group which had emerged in Parliament since the War, showed how the issue was one of national gravity and could no longer with safety be postponed. Of 6 milliard francs' worth of colonial produce imported to France before the War, two-thirds could have come from the French colonies, yet actually 90 per cent. of this trade was in the hands of foreigners! And that despite the fact that France had an adverse trade balance of 1½ milliard francs! Despite the artificial protection of war conditions, this position continued and, in 1920, France obtained only 10 per cent. of her food-imports from the colonies and 5 per cent. of her raw-materials; and even such products as sugar and coffee and cocoa, wool and cotton came from foreign colonies. "The colonial empire *must* make a new effort," cried Hubert in his budget-reports, because to waste the resources actually in the French colonies was as weakening to the country as a military defeat.

This skirmish in the Senate once more popularized the question, and, from that time onwards, it was not a question of the end so much as the means to be employed. A general *mise en valeur* of the colonies was inevitable, it was everywhere agreed: the only question was how this could be achieved. This question had been swept into the general hysteria of the elections of November, 1919, and, it must be confessed, was given a largely distorted importance. "We must produce more or disappear as a nation," the Premier, Millerand, asserted, and such emotional utterances were accepted as grave economic truths. But, emotional or

<sup>10</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 10/7/18,—an important debate.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Senate, 20, 28/2/20,—fundamental. Compare article in *Colonies et Marine*, March-April, 1920, p. 34.



not, this phase was in the ascendant, and the *mise en valeur* plan must be considered in the light of these influences. Sarraut introduced the plan, and he was simply the expression of his time. He saw colonial matters in this importance, he was a member of a Cabinet which was striking out in new directions. Only three members of the Millerand Cabinet were professional politicians, for the Premier had responded to the national crisis by turning away from the political *coteries* inside Parliament to the economic groups outside. "The Millerand Ministry," it was written at the time, "emphasizes the passing of Parliamentary rule, and the rise to power of the economic unit in government."<sup>12</sup> It was dominated by outside bankers and business men, and, called into being by a huge majority to solve the nation's economic problem, was relying on economic technicians, for the colonies as for the mainland itself. It is as an offshoot of this wider movement and as one expression of the new economic *Zeitgeist* and the emotional intensity of 1920 that the Sarraut plan must be considered. Divorced from this wider context, it seems inflated, almost unreal; but, considered as one element in the general recasting of national affairs, it becomes more easily explained. If the thwarted instincts of post-war France had not found expression in this economic channel, and if the colonial problem had not formed one part of a similar national issue, it would have been difficult to explain either the scope or the ready acceptance of the Sarraut plan. But, thrown against this background, the element of mystery about it vanishes, and the feeling that it was only a spectacular gesture goes too. Largely the product of overwrought emotions it might be, but it was still a part and parcel of a wider national scheme, and as such came down to reality.

Albert Sarraut,—the Radical deputy who has already come into this survey, as a successful Governor-General of Indo-China, and as the leading exponent of the *association* theory,—outlined his policy in Indo-China in the French Senate as early as February, 1920, and in the Deputies in July of the same year.<sup>13</sup> But it was not until April 12, 1921, that the scheme was put forward in its final form,—in that form of a general programme which has since been accepted as the basis of colonial development.<sup>14</sup> He commenced his exposition by showing how the general colonial question had been metamorphosed by the conditions of the War. Until then, the image had been blurred: but, by 1920, he argued, the pressure of economic facts had given it definiteness. The

<sup>12</sup> "New York Nation," 10/4/20, in E. M. Sait, *Government and Politics of France* (1920), p. 326.

<sup>13</sup> E.g. in *Journal Officiel*, Depts., 3/7/20; Senate, 28/2/20.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, Depts., 13/4/21, 19/6/21. Compare *Colonies et Marine*, August 1921, p. 481.

theory of the day was that French destinies depended on increased production. To do this, colonial and metropolitan action had to dovetail in to each other, and the colonies were to become reservoirs of raw material and emporia for home manufacturers. But the striking feature, as he emphasized it, was the mutual interdependence of France and the colonies, and the realization that the former depended on the latter as much as the latter did on the former. A new interpretation was given to this interaction. "Here again," said Sarraut, "and the phenomenon is of a relatively recent date, the image of colonial reality comes to adapt itself as a necessary complement to that of metropolitan existence"; and this realization on the part of French politicians was something entirely new.<sup>15</sup> Instead of the improvised empiricism of pre-war years, there was to be what Sarraut called "colonial incorporation," a term which in itself expressed the mutualism and the necessity of colonial aid.<sup>16</sup>

To realize this new objective, Sarraut held that all colonial efforts had to be co-ordinated. The earlier policy of *petits paquets*,—of desultory and discontinuous schemes, was anathema to the reformers. The Millerand Ministry stood for the elimination of such policies from national existence, and nowhere had they been more noticeable in the past than in the colonies. There, a fixed plan was needed above all things. A division of labour was necessary, if the maximum output was to be obtained, and this meant specialization. Each colony, therefore, had to confine its development to those particular directions that would strengthen the general structure: the older notion of an attempt to secure something like colonial self-sufficiency was definitely discarded. Colonization had to become specialized. "Our colonies must be centres of production and no longer museums of specimens,"—development had to be made efficient and co-ordinated. Mass-effort on the best factory-principle was the word of the day,—in short, the application of the principles of modern industry was to transform the colonial régime.

The new method of colonization was thus to impose a division of labour on the colonies as a whole, and to introduce efficiency-methods in each part. Sarraut in this much was extending the newer Belgian theory. Lucien Franck, who had been the Belgian Minister of the Colonies since 1919, had consistently urged this "policy of industrialization," and had said that colonization was only a synonym for industrial modernization under post-war conditions.<sup>17</sup> A leader of industry, Lippens, had been appointed Governor-General of the Belgian Congo, and was to manage

<sup>15</sup> Speech at Brussels Colonial Conference, in *L'Afrique Française*, May 1923, p. 247.

<sup>16</sup> *La Mise en Valeur des Colonies Françaises*, p. 316.

<sup>17</sup> *L'Afrique Française*, Feb. 1922, p. 113; compare May 1921, p. 162.

the colony as he would a huge industrial undertaking. Sarraut readily adopted this idea. Despising what he dubbed *colonisation en jardins*, he turned to a huge programme of imperialistic specialization. The colonial world was roughly divided up into groups, each of which was assigned a certain range of products and provided with facilities for an intensive and efficient development. That, in brief, was the Sarraut method. West and Central Africa had to give oils and timber: West Africa had also to follow the Gold Coast in providing cocoa and had to stress cotton in the Niger valley: North Africa had to concentrate on food-stuffs and phosphates: Indo-China, in addition to its rice, was to provide cotton and silk and rubber: Madagascar had to give meat and grains, and the Antilles sugar and coffee. The products of each were to go into the great national pool. Work was apportioned so that it would produce the maximum result, and, really, the whole Empire was to become a huge factory, using every device of industrial specialization.<sup>18</sup>

The first step in securing this increased output was in providing facilities for the development of the wealth that was latent in nearly every colony. The Sarraut programme, as translated into practice, thus came to mean a scheme of public-works, empire-wide. He took the general principles of his predecessors, Simon and Hubert, and gave them a definite practical expression. Above all, he wanted a development that was practical and that would secure the most return. Therefore, he invoked the aid of the specialists. In February, 1921, he appointed a Commission of technicians to outline a plan for the scientific development of the colonies, in particular by picking out those nerve-centres which could serve as the principal centres of production. On these strategic points in the economic world, his State efforts in the direction of communications and other facilities were to centre. Commissions had previously been instituted in each local group of colonies: now, their findings were co-ordinated, and the whole resolved into what is known as "the Sarraut Plan." This was to construct public works to the value of four milliards of francs and allow future colonial development to take place round these pivots. The North African possessions, being under other Ministries, did not come under the scheme, but every other colony was to benefit.<sup>19</sup>

The main works were naturally in the larger colonies, especially those which, like Indo-China and West Africa, produced the most. For instance, in West Africa, the Dakar port was to be extended and the Thiès-Kayes railway completed; and development in general was to centre as far as possible on the Niger irrigation-scheme. Equatorial Africa, the most

<sup>18</sup> Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, pp. 339-341.

<sup>19</sup> For details, see Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, p. 342 *et seq.*

backward of the French colonies, was to be released from its dependence on the Belgian Congo by the construction of a railway from Brazzaville to the sea, and the Cameroons were to have their economic future, already a bright one, enwidened by the extension of the central railway-line to Yaundé. Indo-China was to receive four extensive harbour-works and the completion of the Vinh-Donghoi and Tourane-Saigon railways. The lesser colonies all benefited, though effort in most was restricted to ports and roads. For the first time in their history, all of the French colonies, outside of North Africa, had a general scheme of development. Their economic development was chosen for them in certain directions, and the site and nature of their public works determined with this end in view. The building of those works would provide the various colonies with the materials for development and remove the complaint that production had hitherto been diminished because of inadequate governmental aid. Hereafter, with the expenditure of 4,000 million francs, public works would for some time be in advance of the productivity of each group, and there would be no reason why the doubling of colonial production, as forecast by the Colonial Conference of 1917, should not be achieved. Sarraut's facilities once provided, there could be no excuse for any more delay in realizing the potentialities of each colony.<sup>20</sup>

The plan itself was deposed as a *projet de loi* in April, 1921, and approved both by Parliament and the various Chambers of Commerce.<sup>21</sup> It is true that everything at the moment was auspicious. Parliament had been awakened by the Senate's activities in the previous years; the Press, usually so indifferent to colonial matters other than scandals, had followed the *Temps* and the new colonial periodicals in supporting the project; and the country, stirred up by the entry of the colonial matter into the last election ("the first time a rational appeal was made to the electors about the latent resources of overseas France"),<sup>22</sup> was interested to a quite unusual degree. The Colonial Group in Parliament now numbered a hundred members, and colonial matters had been regularly discussed in the elections. The Economic Agencies which had been created in Paris by the Governments of the leading colonies in 1918-1920 and the Agency-General of the Colonies (1920) were furthering the contact between the colonial markets and the metropolis, and, in general, advertising the colonies. A Colonial Economic Council had been instituted in 1920 as a part, perhaps the most vital part, of the reformed *Conseil Supérieur des Colonies*, and permanent Commissions on colonial questions alone had been set up in Parliament in 1921 for the first time. There had

<sup>20</sup> See Sarraut (1923), Appendix I, for details.

<sup>21</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 19/6/21. Compare Briand in 21/6/21.

<sup>22</sup> Important article in *Colonies et Marine*, May 31, 1920, p. 263.

never been so many colonial agencies, never such co-ordination, never such interest in questions of colonial development.<sup>23</sup>

The Sarraut project itself was confined to an examination of principles and a statement of the necessary works: the financial side was not dealt with for the moment. In this connection, Sarraut adopted the view that the colonies themselves could aid, especially the richer Governments-General like Indo-China and West Africa. The backward colonies,—the Congo and the Pacific, for instance,—would naturally require metropolitan aid, but the others could largely finance their own propositions. Indo-China and West Africa were in a sound financial position, had few loans, and large undeveloped resources. Indo-China, in particular, had an excess of capital, and could, as was shown in 1925, easily raise money by internal loans. The financial aspect of the Sarraut plan, strangely enough, was not the most pressing difficulty, even with a France embarrassed by a war-strain and a depreciating currency. The fundamental points were to secure the acceptance of one general plan, to divide activities amongst the colonies so that they would produce the maximum return, and to arouse the country's interest: and all three of these had been achieved.

The execution of the project, therefore, went on at different rates in each colony, and its main features were soon secured in the larger ones. The railways in West Africa and Indo-China were finished by 1925, and that in the Congo was progressing. Works on the ports in each of these places were in progress. The irrigation-scheme for the Niger was approved and missions sent out to investigate, and a start was made in the direction of controlling the water-supplies of Indo-China. Even in the poorer colonies,—Tahiti, for instance,—the works went on to some degree, the harbour-improvements of Papeete being recommenced. But the lesser parts of the project had to be postponed, because the position changed. The prevalence of high prices up to 1922 meant a considerable degree of colonial prosperity and a general growth of prosperity; and this in turn led to a greater budgetary stability and a general spirit of optimism. Reaching its height,—a somewhat hysterically dizzy height,—at the Colonial Exposition of Marseilles in 1922, this optimism failed to survive the reaction, because the stagnation of European markets reacted on the colonies and budgetary deficits reappeared.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the financial embarrassment of France, coupled with the expenditure of at least 5 milliards in Moroccan and Syrian wars, turned attention away from the *mise en valeur* scheme<sup>25</sup>; and under the circumstances, the

<sup>23</sup> Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, pp. 149, 150.

<sup>24</sup> For analysis see Besson in *L'Afrique Française*, July 1921, p. 233.

<sup>25</sup> Cachin in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 7/12/24.

wonder was, not that the project was not carried out in its entirety, but that even its major lines should have been sketched. The metropolis could afford practically no aid, because, although most of the colonies paid their civil expenses and the larger even made grants towards their military charges, the great bulk of the Minister of Colonies' appropriation was already earmarked. Although the three North African States and Syria were not under his control, the Minister of the Colonies had to pay 197 million francs out of his total budget of 232 million (1924) for military expenses. An extra 13½ million went for the penal expenses of Guiana, and this left only 21½ million for the civil expenses of all the colonies. Even of that, 13 million went for temporary aids to colonial budgets and to railway charges of the past, so that there was clearly nothing left for new public works.<sup>26</sup>

Fortunately, there were certain alleviating factors. The budget of the Minister of Public Works included many colonial charges. Indo-China could easily look after itself and even finance the Pacific schemes. Equatorial Africa and the sugar-islands were so badly off that their works were not urgent. Madagascar was so quietly prosperous that new works there were not of paramount urgency. So that only West Africa remained. It was there that the need was the most vital, and that a given expenditure could produce the most return. West Africa still holds this peculiar position in the French Empire, and so far little has been done to overcome it. For the parts of the Empire not under the Colonial Minister, the position varied. Morocco was amply provided for by its own budget, and Tunisia, a land of city-dwellers and traders, did not need much: but Algeria, where the presence of 750,000 Europeans gave the problem a quite unique significance, simply drifted. It needed works more urgently perhaps than any other colony: its budget, which did not re-attain equilibrium after the War until 1925, could make no new provisions: and it had to depend on metropolitan aid.

The Sarraut project therefore needs re-stating and bringing up to date. Sarraut's successors, Daladier and André Hesse, performed yeoman service in continuing his work, but it was a new theorist with an executive mind who was needed, rather than loyal henchmen. Moreover, as this is a really national question, provision should be made for all the colonies, irrespective of the particular Ministry under whose control they may be. It is a matter for the Minister of Public Works rather than the Minister of the Colonies. In addition, financial provision should be made with the formulation of the scheme, and not, as was the case with the original Sarraut project, left haphazardly and to varying degrees with the different colonies. The Sarraut scheme accomplished much: more still remains

<sup>26</sup> Hubert Report, in *Ibid.*, Senate, docts. parl., 1923, No. 320.

to be done by a scheme beginning where that of Sarraut left off and based on the needs of the French Empire as altered by the post-war travail,—that is, on the Empire as it emerged from the test in 1925.

The general problem remains the same as when Sarraut commenced his labour. There has been little increased production, and France received only 10 per cent. of her colonial goods from her own lands in 1925. As Archimbaud, the budget-reporter for 1926, bitterly protested in the Deputies in December, 1926, the colonies were drifting. In 1925, for instance, France imported 3,200 million francs' worth of wool, of which North Africa gave only  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., yet its wool-lands were very similar to those of Australia! Of 4,100 millions of cotton 2 per cent. only came from the French colonies, the Niger scheme and the Indo-Chinese ventures notwithstanding! She absorbed 2,145 millions of cereals other than rice, and of this North Africa,—the lands of the Tell and the black-earth,—provided 13 per cent.! And he could have gone right down the list.<sup>27</sup> The old evils remained; the new projects belonged largely to the world of theory. The scheme to industrialize colonization had barely commenced, despite its success in the Belgian Congo; and the cotton-project in particular had practically stopped at the stage of investigation by missions of inquiry. Colonial industry, which had been given a fillip during the war-years (witness the development of Tonkin, the nickel and blast-furnaces of New Caledonia, and the secondary industries in West Africa and Madagascar), found itself shackled anew by metropolitan restrictions. Since the War, France has constantly been slipping back in the import-trade of her colonies and has not been able to command any more of their exports; and the old policy of tariff-assimilation, self-annulling though it might almost be termed, has increased in proportion to the loss of colonial trade by France. This, when joined to the actual diminution of colonial production, led to a new lethargy,—a lethargy accentuated by the national financial crisis of 1925–1926. The *mise en valeur* project was thus of necessity swept into the background.

Yet the potentialities of the French colonies are more clearly defined than ever, and the successful parts of the Sarraut plan, achieved as they were in the face of great difficulties, show what can be done, if the capital and the progressive spirit are there. The colonies can give France the bulk of the colonial materials she is absorbing in greater quantities every year,—that is clear beyond the possibility of doubt.<sup>28</sup> Cereals come first in the list, because the country depends on them for her food-supplies.

<sup>27</sup> Archimbaud Report in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., docts. parl., 1926, No. 3401. Compare *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 2/12/26.

<sup>28</sup> For detailed analysis of each article, see Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, p. 154 *et seq.*

Here North Africa and Syria, the wheat-lands, have their scope. At present, North Africa produces 23 million metric quintals a year, and Syria 2, and between them they export  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million to France,—about one-tenth of France's annual imports. The wheat-lands in each of these colonies, however, are capable of great expansion, with both a qualitative and quantitative increase. The fault here is directly a remediable one. It is due to the failure to improve native methods, to offer adequate facilities to a European population (witness the flight from the land in Algeria and the failure in Morocco), and to minimize the chances of failure by irrigation and rural-credit. France openly admits her weakness in all of these directions, yet is hindered in her future policies by the legacy of the past and the mistrust of the people.

With wool, the next article in the colonial cornucopia, the position is worse. It is a strange fact that the French have nowhere succeeded in implanting a strong pastoral industry in their colonies, and have even, as in West Africa and Algeria, allowed native pasture positively to decline. France needs fine merino wool, but has to go mainly to the British colonies and Argentine. In 1920 her own colonies furnished only 104,000 metric quintals out of 1,630,000,—a negligible help, although the Central Wool Committee, instituted in 1920, is hopeful about the future. But what France has lacked in the way of achievement, she has always made up for in the way of committees! Nevertheless, in this case, she had the materials. The *hauts plateaux* of Algeria are good sheep-lands, the Central Niger deltasaw its flocks go up by leaps and bounds during the war-years, and Madagascar has offered fair returns. But, to date, despite the presence of essentially pastoral races like the desert Arabs or the Peuhls of West Africa, little has been achieved, and that little rather in the direction of weakening native pasture than introducing new varieties.

The next, and most emphasized, article on the colonial list is cotton. This is a most vexed question. In so far as France's economic policy in the colonies could be defined after the War, it could almost be termed a policy of cotton. This was a matter immediately touching French industry, and the hold of the industrialists on colonial policy has been a truism since Ferry's day. So vital was it that, until the over-production of 1926, it attracted more attention than any other question in colonial life.<sup>29</sup> The French colonists, said Sarraut, can and must help here. They gave only one-hundredth of the cotton-imports in 1920, one-fiftieth in 1925, so that France was dependent on the United States for the very maintenance of an industry that employed 300,000 workers. She needs at least three million metric quintals of raw-cotton every year, yet the

<sup>29</sup> E.g., Governor Angoulvant in *Colonies et Marine*, 1921, pp. 567, 645 *et seq.*, or *L'Afrique Française*, Sept. 1923, p. 466, or Sarraut (1923), pp. 163-175.



colonies, suitable though many of them are for cotton-growing, produce 24,000 ! The lesson, if it needed any pointing, was amply driven home by the suffering after the crop-failures of 1903, 1907, and 1921, and by the success of the British Cotton-Growing Association in the African colonies adjacent to the French. The one showed the need for self-reliance in this matter, the other showed what could be done under similar conditions to those of the French colonies. France therefore concentrated on this question of cotton-production, and that was one reason why the mainland Chambers of Commerce were so enamoured of the Sarraut project. Two regions in particular were favoured,—Indo-China and West Africa. In the former, some 600,000 hectares of river-land are available, but the trouble is that labour is scarce, and, moreover, since Indo-China has already entered the industrial stage, the colony is more concerned with importing raw-cotton than producing it. In West Africa, the early failures showed that cotton depends primarily on irrigation, although, when the Béline Mission settled doubts on this score in 1920, problems of labour and transport came to the fore. On the one hand is the undoubted fact that there are two million hectares of irrigable land in the Niger basin, mostly suited for cotton, and especially for the native-produced variety, the American form, which France wants so badly. But against this are the difficulties caused by native ineptitude and by the passage over the intervening 1,200 kilometres to the coast. Neither of these, it must be admitted, is insoluble ; and, now that the irrigation and railway projects are proceeding, the Niger valley, the failure of the past notwithstanding, remains one of the most hopeful cotton-centres of the world. In the meantime, American price-control has shown France more than ever the need of her independence in this matter, although the over-production of 1925–1926 has somewhat altered the premises of the French argument.

These are the main colonial supplies that France wants from her colonies. The others are much more satisfactory. The oleaginous products, though still largely drawn from abroad, are satisfactorily developed in French Africa : France gets her rice from Indo-China : the rubber-position occasions no disquietude : the lumber-resources of the African forests, though hindered during the War, have been offering more and more since 1905 : the production of coffee is increasing, though much still remains to be done : and the colonies can do little to minimize France's dependence on the foreigner for metals other than iron and antimony. In all of these directions, except the last, the French effort has accomplished much, and the future lies with a mere extension of what had already been done. It is not these lesser products, but cotton and food-supplies, that provide the real difficulty, and here the achievement has been least.

There France remains at present, with her colonial needs very clearly defined, but no more realized than when the Sarraut policy was promulgated. Her colonial policy is clear. It aims at the strengthening of both France and the colonies by a policy of industrialization. "France, organizing its future on the most powerful foundations," said Sarraut, "must demand from her colonies and protectorates men for the army, money to lessen the budgetary expenses, raw materials and products for her industry, and commerce, food, and exchange."<sup>30</sup> France presents the bill to her colonies, with a covering note that its payment will increase their own prosperity! But she is a little reluctant to recognize that it also entails an added sacrifice on her part, and that the result cannot be achieved as long as the great part of her colonial revenue is spent on military expeditions in Morocco and Syria. Until the initial help comes from the metropolis for a new Sarraut plan, the colonies will limp on, with their present stationary production.

To-day, only four—Indo-China, Morocco, West Africa, and Madagascar—may be said to be in a satisfactory position, and, as a whole, the French possessions remain backward. At least, the actual production is in no sense commensurate with the possibilities, or even with what could reasonably have been expected under the circumstances. France is only at the threshold of the economic task in the colonies, and, owing to the financial crisis of the metropolis, the whole question finds itself back again in the position it was in when Sarraut first raised his standard for a *mise en valeur*. It is estimated, for instance, that France has about 7,087 million francs invested in her colonies, two-thirds of which is in North Africa. By way of contrast, Holland has 20,000 millions in the works and commerce of the East Indies alone, and an additional 6,500 in loans,—a total of 26½ milliards in all. That is, in one colony, the Dutch have three times more than France has in all her overseas domain, and at least ten times what France has in tropical colonies of the East India type. So resourceful has Holland been that she has called in 40 per cent. of foreign capital and has set up whole industries (Sumatra rubber, for instance) by invoking this outside aid: France, for her part, has practically none, and, despite certain spasmodic discussions of the matter in the Press and colonial circles (as in 1922 and late 1926), shows little desire of having it. The position could not be clearer: the French colonies are, and always have been, starved for want of capital,—and until this basic defect is removed, little development, if any, can be expected.<sup>31</sup> The

<sup>30</sup> Sarraut (1923), p. 41. Compare *L'Afrique Française*, Nov. 1923, p. 615, or Hubert budget-report, *op. cit.*, 1923.

<sup>31</sup> Important article by Restany in *Revue des Questions Coloniales et Maritimes*, March-April 1924, p. 50 *et seq.*

colonial process divides into conquest and organization : as a comparison with Egypt and India and Java will show, France has not so far realized this.

### III. The Budgetary Position

#### THEORY

As the French Empire expanded, one of the first and most difficult problems that emerged was that of the budgets, because herein lay most of the colonial problem. France was receiving revenues and defraying expenses, part of which were in the colonies ; and each colony was similarly getting and spending. But what relationship was there between these various items ? There were clearly not four distinct accounts, and yet they could not be merged into one. Some of the French money spent in the colonies was for expenses that could be termed national, because they concerned Imperial welfare, yet other amounts were for purely local concerns : similarly, some colonial receipts were not due only to colonial activities, but came from facilities of a national character. Defence, for example, concerned both colony and mother-country, yet which was to pay for it ?

The presence of wider national interests thus prevented France from dissociating herself with the finances of any colony : and, on the other hand, the fact that each colony depended for its very existence on mainland French activities allowed the entry of other than colonial factors into the budgetary situation. What, therefore, was the relationship between these various sets of factors ?—that was the problem. Was there to be one national budget or separate ones for each colony ? If the former, how were purely local interests to be safeguarded ? And if the latter, what was to be the relation between the State Budget of France and each local budget ? How were the finances of any colony related to those of the Metropolis and to those of the other colonies ? With an Empire flung over both hemispheres and yet controlled from France, the budgetary problems were thus very real,—the more so because the Budget was, as it were, the barometer of colonial liberalism. The vagaries of French colonial policy found expression in changes in the colonial budgets, so that the budgetary question here was even wider than, say, with the British colonies.

Three financial *régimes* could be conceived for the colonies. The first, the natural one in French theory, would be a complete assimilation. The colony was incorporated in the nation, therefore its affairs would be dealt with in a section of the State Budget passed by the French Parliament. The colony would have no more individuality than Périgord or Picardy,

or any other French *département*, and local budgets would deal only with the charges of municipal administration, as in France. Strange as it may appear, Algerian finances were thus dealt with between 1859 and 1901, although they had a special section to themselves. In addition, a trace of this system still survives in France, because many exclusively colonial charges come under the Budgets of the Ministries of War, Foreign Affairs, and Public Works. This was, in short, the system the French preferred, although the growth of the Empire made such a rigid centralization impracticable. The other extreme in theory is the system of autonomy. Each colony, under it, is viewed as a State within a State, and has a budget of its own on a par with the central budget of France. All colonial charges figure on the local budget, whether they are of national or purely local interest, but the colony supports no national charges,—that is, it pays nothing for the Navy or the metropolitan army. This reads very well in theory, but unfortunately does not succeed in practice. Defence, for instance, is thrown exclusively on France, and, still more important, there is no adequate guarantee for those interests which, though confined to one colony, immediately concern the welfare of the whole nation. Theoretically, these go to the colonial budget; but in practice, the metropolis must keep such affairs under its control, because, however much they may be colonial in name, their nature is clearly more than colonial. If there is complete autonomy, it is impossible to draw a line between purely local and national matters: and, in fact, the French have come to hinge their whole budgetary theory on these local expenses which have a national character,—“expenses of sovereignty,” as they are called. The *régime* of autonomy in this fashion would have come to wreck on the interaction in certain matters between colony and metropolis, even had France wished for such a system.

Two theories were thus put out of court. That of budgetary assimilation was removed by the factors of colonial growth and distance, while the autonomy idea was disposed of by the difficulty of defining and dealing with national interests. The only way left out of the resultant dilemma was by some sort of a compromise. Each colony would have a budget of its own for those local affairs which did not concern the nation as a whole: but, at the same time, it was recognized that certain charges arise from the general fact of metropolitan sovereignty and, subject, of course, to colonial aid, had to be met by the metropolis. To carry out this, there would have to be a general colonial budget as a part of the State Budget of France, to deal with matters like defence and other items that could not with safety be left entirely to the colonies. Beyond this, there would be the purely local budgets for each colony. After many hesitations,—and possibly because events had proved that there

was no other way out of the dilemma,—France thus came to look upon assimilation and autonomy as ideals or tendencies when applied to the budgetary sphere, and, by way of compromise, adopted the “mixed system,”—a system which, while mainly autonomous, partakes of the nature of assimilation to the degree to which national interests enter.<sup>32</sup>

As in most colonial matters, the French have vacillated time and again in their solutions of this problem. After 1815, however, the general principle came to be that expenses of sovereignty and protection were defrayed by the State Budget of France, while local charges were dealt with by the local budget in each colony. The term “expenses of sovereignty” was the key-note of the situation, because it included those charges which were of more than colonial importance and the existence of which prevented any rigid separation of colonial and imperial matters. Beyond such charges, the principle, formally posed in a law of January, 1825, was that the colonies should be self-sufficient, paying their own expenses. Naturally, a good deal depended under these circumstances upon the definition given to “expenses of sovereignty.” As these increased, so the colony became in a better position, and vice versa, so that the budgetary history of the colonies came to be a succession of new charges and reliefs, according to variations in the list of expenses borne by the State Budget.<sup>33</sup>

Under the Monarchy of July, when decentralization was in favour, a law of April, 1833, gave the Colonial Councils the right of controlling the local budgets, subject to Royal sanction. This was the nearest approach possible to the system of budgetary autonomy, but, even then, the expenses of general administration and military costs still went to the central budget. The new system came to grief because the colonials had had no education in the matter of communal responsibility: they interpreted their privileges in terms of antagonism to the mother-country, and, taking advantage of the proviso whereby the State had agreed to come to their aid in the case of deficits, systematically created an excess of expenditure over receipts. They had all the joy of spending and none of the responsibility in meeting the accounts,—a position to which they had no objections.

Under these conditions, France had no choice except to revert to a system of budgetary assimilation, which was accordingly set up again by a law of June, 1841. This distinguished between expenses of general

<sup>32</sup> Antonelli, *Manuel de Législation Coloniale* (1926), p. 175; *Congrès des Anciennes Colonies*, 1909, p. 216.

<sup>33</sup> Mérignhac, *Précis de Législation et d'Economie Coloniales* (1912), p. 457. A history of these systems in full is in G. François, *Le Budget Local des Colonies* (1908), p. 12 *et seq.*

interest and those which were purely and exclusively local, and arranged for the first to be voted by Parliament and the latter by the Colonial Councils in each colony. But so narrowly limited were the "expenses of sovereignty" under this dyarchy that the system in practice meant the exploitation of the colonies. France was exacting compensation for the colonial excesses in the previous stage. The State received more from the colonies than it spent on them, all of the customs-receipts, for instance, being reserved for the central Treasury. It was a system of tribute, and obviously unfair to the colonies, which received more expenses and less receipts.

Once more, therefore, the system was restored to the position that had pertained before 1841. A *sénatus-consulte* of May, 1854, revived a limited autonomy, under which the colony received all its taxes and paid all of its expenses, excepting matters of general interest.<sup>34</sup> But, as usual, the pendulum had swung too far in the way of reaction, and the State had to take on itself many colonial burdens. The result was that increasingly larger grants-in-aid were necessary, and the colonies were in fact exacting an uncalled-for tribute from the metropolis. To put a stop to this anomaly, a further *sénatus-consulte* of 1866 strictly limited the "expenses of sovereignty," which were borne by the central Government. Hereafter, they were to include only the Governor's expenses, the *personnel* of justice, military costs, and a few lesser charges: beyond that, the colonial budgets were to be autonomous. They were to receive their own revenues and meet the great part of their own expenses.<sup>35</sup> This system at first applied only to the *Anciennes Colonies*, but it was gradually extended to all of the colonies, and remained as the basis of the budgetary system until the great reform of 1900.

In the meantime, the North African possessions had been evolving separately. It was not unnatural that Algeria, in view of the settlement-schemes and the closer contact with mainland France, should have had a separate system: it would have been very strange if its budget had *not* been more closely connected with that of the metropolis than those of the other colonies. Accordingly, there was much less alternation there between the two rival budgetary theories. Algeria knew practically nothing of that "see-saw" movement that characterized the other colonies in this regard. After 1839, it is true, there was a distinction between the Algerian and metropolitan budgets, and a growing recognition that receipts from any one province should be mainly used in that

<sup>34</sup> Dislère, *Traité de Législation Coloniale* (1906), Vol. I, pp. 84, 218 *et seq.* The Isaac Report on it is in E. Petit, *Organisation des Colonies Françaises*, Vol. I, 1894, p. 103.

<sup>35</sup> François (1908), *op. cit.*, pp. 31-34.

province. But this was inchoate until a decree of October, 1888, definitely gave each of the three Algerian provinces a Council-General and a budget of its own,—a position which was similar to that of the French *départements*. At the same time, a further step in the direction of assimilation was taken by abolishing the budget for Algeria as a whole. The colony thus lost the financial personality which it had enjoyed for the previous nineteen years, and its budget was attached *in toto* to the French State budget. Thus, assimilation had triumphed in Algeria in the very years when the rival system of autonomy had been growing in the other colonies, and the exception became more noticeable when the protectorate of Tunisia was given complete autonomy for its budgetary affairs, the only outside stipulation being that France was to pay its military expenses.

As the century neared its close, however, this general budgetary position occasioned many protests, especially in France. The old theory of "expenses of sovereignty" had fallen into disrepute, and France was not so solicitous of national interests. The most obvious feature of the situation as she saw it was that the State Budget was meeting many charges that were clearly colonial. An ingenious budget reporter in 1893, for instance, calculated exactly how much each Frenchman was paying a year for the pleasure of calling a negro of the Antilles or Senegal a fellow-citizen! Every negro in Martinique cost the State Budget 13½ francs, every fisherman of St. Pierre levied a toll of 44.70, every exile in Guiana 52 francs: and it is a sufficient commentary on the newer French attitude that such a calculation should have been made and given extensive publicity. But France felt a very real grievance in this matter. "The metropolis perceived that it was playing the rôle of a dupe," said Girault, "and had grown tired of this anomalous position."<sup>36</sup>

From 1893 onwards, therefore, a definite reform movement became noticeable, actuated almost entirely by the desire to limit central charges. This point is most important, because, in after years, the reforms of 1900 came to be surrounded with a roseate halo and interpreted as the most striking manifestation of liberal tendencies in French colonial policy. In reality, the so-called liberal reform was more in the nature of an economy for the metropolis. As Caillaux, who was the Colonial Minister when the law of 1900 was passed, definitely said in introducing it:—

"It is common knowledge that the metropolitan taxpayer had to pay not only all the expenses of the metropolis, but in addition 44 per cent. of the charges incurred by the colonies, whereas the colonial taxpayer, while contributing nothing towards metropolitan finances, pays only 56 per cent.

<sup>36</sup> Girault (1922), 2.1.694.

of his own expenses. Any administrative and financial system that allows such an inequality seems to have no justification." <sup>27</sup>

The motive behind the reform was thus quite clear, although it must be conceded that there was some desire to foster the growth of the colonies themselves. This was especially the case with Algeria, whose budgetary position was more reactionary than in the case of any other colony. There, the upheavals of the nineties had resulted in the abolition of the system of *rattachements* which had denied administrative freedom to the country: and the consequent institution of a powerful Government-General naturally indicated budgetary autonomy as the next reform. Algeria, having fought for, and obtained, administrative liberty, now demanded a corresponding degree of financial privilege, and argued rather noisily that it was incompatible with her new status to be shackled to metropolitan finances.

After a curious interlude of 1893, when for the first time a contribution was levied on the colonies for the civil and military expenses and "the general charges of the State,"—a form of Imperial tribute quite contrary to the *régime* of 1866,—the direction of change was clear. The newer idea was that the colonies should meet the whole of their expenses, irrespective of the fact whether the charges in question were or were not "expenses of sovereignty." The old shibboleth of "expenses of sovereignty" was now buried for ever, and the goal was, as Caillaux said, in explaining his reform, to consider "each colony as a distinct unit, having its own resources and particular interests, organizing itself in proportion to its development, and, while aided in the last resort by the metropolis, taking care above all things to create its own finances and credit." The principle was that of autonomy, with the State paying all military expenses, beyond the aid given by colonial contributions. The reform, since it was regarded mainly as a measure of economy, encountered little opposition.

It had been proposed by Siegfried in 1899,<sup>28</sup> approved by a Parliamentary Commission of Local Budgets in the same year,<sup>29</sup> and embodied in the famous law of finances of April 13, 1900. Section 33 of that law was perfectly concise on the matter. In somewhat staccato phraseology, it said that "all the civil expenses and the cost of the *gendarmerie* are to be defrayed by the local budgets of the colonies.—Grants can be given to the colonies from the State Budget.—The colonies can be made to grant to the State amounts up to the cost of their military expenses." Each

<sup>27</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 12/12/99.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, Senate, docta. parl., 1899, p. 25.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 28/7/99, p. 5401. For previous Commission, see *Ibid.*, Senate, 31/3/98.



colony was given a civil personality, each received all its revenues (subject to a varying military contribution for the more prosperous), each met all its own charges, each secured its own loans, and each, should the need arise, could obtain a grant-in-aid from the State Budget of France. But, in general, the finances of any normal colony were to be kept distinct and included everything except military charges.<sup>40</sup> That is the system which, as organized anew in the fundamental decree of December 30, 1912, still rules.

The central budget is, of course, dealt with as a part of the general State Budget, and is subject to no special influences. On the other hand, the local budgets in each colony vary considerably in their methods. Certain points are shared in common. Every colony has a "moral personality" and has a budget like a French *département*, and a power of raising loans. All budgets, too, are divided into obligatory and optional portions, the former entirely under executive control: and all are communicated to the French Parliament. In practice, there is a further similarity. In effect, the local budgets everywhere (save in Algeria) are drawn up and controlled by the executive, though with certain limitations in the case of colonies which have representative councils. In colonies not so favoured (or, as the French would say, not so limited), and in mandated territories, the Governor, advised, but in no sense compulsorily influenced, by his Executive Council, draws up the budget, which is approved by a Ministerial decree from Paris. But "it is the Governor who is the master of the situation"<sup>41</sup>: he decides where the money is to come from and how it is to be appropriated, and it is this predominance of the local executive which accounts for the great variations between the financial systems of the colonies,—why one might have mainly indirect taxes, another direct; why one might tax land and another natives, and so on.<sup>42</sup>

In those colonies which have representative assemblies, the procedure is more complicated. The Governor, aided as before by his chief executive officials, draws up the budget in its original form and then submits it to the *Conseil-Général* for its approval. But this approval has nothing to do with the so-called "obligatory charges" which include all of the essential features of the administration. The items kept away from the assembly are more inclusive than in the case of the *Conseils-Généraux* of France itself, and the whole idea of a dyarchy is evolved with the aim

<sup>40</sup> For the debates, see *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 13/4/1900, p. 847; Senate, 10/4/1900, p. 414. Decrais's explanation is in *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 12/12/99. A long legal analysis of the passage is in François, *op. cit.*, p. 89 *et seq.*

<sup>41</sup> Mérynhac (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 431.

<sup>42</sup> François (1908), *op. cit.*, p. 86 *et seq.*

of safeguarding the executive from interference by the representative body. The Council can therefore only vote on the "optional" expenses, and if it does not make provision for these, or, for some reason or other, fails to pass the budget, the Governor can do so of his own authority and over its head. France wastes no time in dealing with recalcitrant legislative bodies: they have to conform to the executive's wishes or be ignored. In the matter of deciding taxation, the accepted principle is that no tax can be raised without the approval of the *Conseil-Général* (except Customs); although, in practice, no tax decided upon by the local Council is accepted unless approved by a decree of the Council of State. In every sphere, therefore, executive control remains. The Council has power over the "optional" expenses, but the actual extent of its powers depends on the attitude of the local officials. They are all permissive rather than actual; and it is the checks, or rather, the possibility of the checks, that dominate the situation. The peculiar feature of the arrangement is the part to which such control enters even the budgets of the various federations, where one would naturally expect a greater degree of freedom. In such groups, the Governor-General fixes the budget with the aid of his advisory Council of officials, and it is approved by a Ministerial decree. Representative assemblies play no part in determining the federal budgets of West and Equatorial Africa, or Indo-China, while in Madagascar, the only check, if such it might be called, is in the advice proffered by the new *Délégations Financières*. Similarly, the provincial budgets within each of these federations are determined entirely by the executive, the only exceptions being that *Conseils-Coloniaux* play in the peculiar colonies of Senegal and Cochin-China the part that *Conseils-Généraux* have in the *Anciennes Colonies*. Beyond these exceptions, executive control is entirely unchecked.

Algeria has a special and more complicated system, though in essence it merely duplicates the principles followed in the colonies which have a *Conseil-Général*.<sup>43</sup> Many systems were possible under Algerian conditions. The budget could have been voted by at least four Powers, but France, perceiving the difficulties involved in all of these limitations, adopted none. The law of 1900 tried to conciliate all of them by giving a part to each, and allowing the collaboration of the Governor-General, the *Délégations Financières*, the *Conseil Supérieur*, the Minister of the Interior, the President of the Republic, the Council of State, the Chamber of Deputies, and the Senate, allotting to each a fixed rôle! Presumably at this stage, the ingenuity of its draftsmen became exhausted, although there still remained the Academy of France and the Soldiers' League! The position is remarkable. The Governor-General drafts the special

<sup>43</sup> Mérignhac (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 477 *et seq.*

budget and communicates it to the Minister of the Interior, who is responsible for Algerian affairs. After that, it goes to the local representative body, the *Délégations Financières*, where it is submitted to a Commission of Finances for examination, and then approved in a plenary session of all the branches of this mixed body. Where Algeria differs from the other colonies at this stage is not in theory but in practice. Her development has been so rapid and her European population is so large that more extensive rights of control had to be allowed in practice, even though the theoretical rules applying to her were not of any special character. As a result, the "optional expenses," over which the *Délégations* have control, have steadily grown until they now absorb about 80 per cent. of the whole. The power of the *Délégations* is therefore very real, and a recalcitrant Chamber may considerably hamper the work of administration. Once voted by them, however, the budget is sent to the *Conseil Supérieur*, which is a partly elected body whose function it is to ratify or reject certain of the *Délégations'* decisions. Then it goes once more to Paris and is made applicable by a decree of the Council of State, being finally authorized by the annual law of finances in the French Parliament. The remarkable feature is that this cumbersome and intricate machinery, though lumbering a little awkwardly and slowly at times, should have worked fairly well in practice.<sup>44</sup> Every theoretical indication would have been to the contrary, and yet in practice the system is far from a failure, probably because it is largely in accord with the general "checks and balances" of French political life.

Thus, it is clear that, in general, the executive officials control the budgets in the French colonies, and, even in places like Algeria, where a limiting convention had grown up to the contrary, the officials have power to step in if the occasion should arise. In most colonies, the executive is completely untrammelled, and, in the remainder, mainly so, although special privileges have been vouchsafed in practice to Algeria. France still adheres to the theory of executive action in this regard, and continues to look upon the position of the Algerian *Délégations* as entirely an exception, due to the fact that Algeria is not, properly speaking, a colony at all. Where representative bodies exist elsewhere, their position is deemed to be mainly advisory, and at the most, to deal with a minority of the appropriations, and to suggest or approve of any new taxes that may be necessary. The items under their control are invariably the non-essentials, the main aim, as has been seen, being to keep sufficient powers in the hands of the executive officials to enable them to continue the ordinary work of administration under any conditions. Even where some scope is allowed to assemblies, checks to secure the safety of the executive

<sup>44</sup> L. Hubert, *Politique Africaine* (1904), p. 84 et seq.

are always present. Financial matters in French colonies, other than Algeria, are clearly viewed as executive preserves, with the functions of the people's representatives limited as much as possible.

### THE ACTUAL POSITION

In practice, the system of 1900 has achieved its ends. Caillaux introduced it with the specific idea of diminishing the charges on the State Budget. That has certainly come about, because the 45 per cent. of the colonial expenses which had been met by the State in 1895 had dwindled to 25 per cent. by 1910, and the aggregate cost of the colonies remained fairly constant. The central budget of the Ministry of Colonies was practically stationary between 1910 and 1914, and the State benefited in other ways. In ten years the direct aid given to the colonies by France fell from seven to two million francs, and during the same period, the military contributions made to the metropolis rose from ten to fourteen million francs. That is, the system of budgetary autonomy saved the French taxpayer at least ten million francs in the first ten years,—exactly the amount that Caillaux had predicted, and it should be remembered that this did not include the North African colonies, where the saving was greatest.<sup>45</sup>

The central budget, therefore, became of a dwindling importance. At various representative dates, it has been allotted as follows:—

	1895.	1900.	1905.	1910.	1924.	1927
	(Millions of Francs.)					
Civil . . .	14-836	14-710	9-551	9-805	21-2	21
Military . . .	54-635	82-716	93-078	83-766	191-5	320
Penal . . .	9-867	9-066	8-150	7-467	13-4	—
	<hr/> 79-338	<hr/> 106-492	<hr/> 110-777	<hr/> 101-038	<hr/> 226-1	<hr/> 341

On the other hand, extremely satisfactory as this table is (and indeed it is one of the triumphs of French colonization), it should not be forgotten that it does not reveal the whole situation. It would be entirely erroneous, for instance, to say that the colonies cost France only an average of 105 million francs a year between 1900 and 1910, or that the present cost is 341 million francs. Nothing would be further from the point. French Government statistics do not always show the whole of any given situation, and certainly not in this case. This budget does not include the cost of North Africa or the mandated territories, nor does it take account of those purely colonial charges that are reckoned in the budgets of other Ministries. Certain charges are so inextricably mixed with other central accounts that they cannot be distinguished. The above budget, for example, places the military cost of the colonies at 320 million francs,—a sufficiently formidable sum. But to it has to be

<sup>45</sup> François (1908), p. 143 *et seq.*; Mérignhac (1912), *op. cit.*, p. 60 *et seq.*

added the expense of the colonial troops which are under the Minister of War. In 1922 their charge was 219 million francs, as compared with the 185 millions under the Minister of the Colonies, yet the former sum did not occur in any colonial accounts. In addition, many colonial charges figure in the budgets of the Ministries of Marine, Education, and Foreign Affairs: the Minister of Public Works has extensive colonial appropriations, especially for communications: and, in all, the budget of the Colonial Minister reflects far less than half the purely colonial charges. How much more there is cannot exactly be determined, owing to the financial system employed by the French, but it can at least be asserted that it more than doubles the nominal cost of the colonies.

Even allowing this, however, the position of the central budget remains satisfactory. It is mainly concerned with military expenses, and, taking into account the degree of depreciation, has not been increasing since 1900. Still more satisfactory has been the rapid increase in the charges borne by the various local budgets. Their total increased from 97 million francs in 1895 to 154 in 1910, and a milliard in 1927, even excluding North Africa. Adding the 1,400 million francs of North Africa and the 200 millions of the protectorates, the prodigious amount of 2,600 million francs is reached,—prodigious even when considered in terms of purchasing-power rather than depreciated francs.<sup>46</sup> The local charges have gone up by leaps and bounds, and in general, credit-balances have emerged, even if, on the opposite side of the ledger, the loans raised by the colonies have increased from 190 million francs in 1900 to 671 millions in 1910. This increase was shared by all the colonies, except the declining *Anciennes Colonies*, as the table shows:—

	LOCAL BUDGETS							
	1895.		1900.		1905.		1910.	
	Rev.	Exp.	Rev.	Exp.	Rev.	Exp.	Rev.	Exp.
	(Millions of Francs.)							
West Africa (general and local)	10.5	9.2	21.4	15.0	51.8	49.9	51.2	—
Equatorial Africa	3.0	3.0	4.8	4.6	7.5	5.5	9.7	—
Madagascar	11.3	11.3	19.3	17.0	33.9	31.1	30.5	—
Indo-China	58.0	59.2	94.8	84.9	103.0	102.5	129.5	—
Guadeloupe	6.3	6.3	5.9	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.6	—
Martinique	5.5	5.5	6.5	6.5	4.8	4.5	9.7*	—
New Caledonia	2.1	2.2	2.8	2.7	4.1	4.0	3.5	—
Tahiti	1.1	1.1	1.7	1.5	2.1	2.1	1.6	—
	97.8	97.8	157.2	137.1	212.0	204.4	240.3	—

\* Including a loan of 6 million francs.

Such financial autonomy as the Act of 1900 conceded was thus very real. It was far from nominal. Even within a decade, it meant that

<sup>46</sup> Discussion in *Journal Officiel*, Depts., 2/12/26.

the metropolis was saved ten million francs and that the annual budget charges borne by the colonies had increased almost half. The State Budget at present gives subsidies only to the New Hebrides, Equatorial Africa, and Oceania, and the backwardness of all these is due to special features. All of the other colonies pay their own civil expenses, many have amassed considerable reserves, and the colonies pay in all 28 million francs to the metropolis, mostly as a contribution towards their military expenses. This is of course only about six per cent. of what the State had to pay out, but, on the other hand, it means that, apart from those charges which justly devolve on the sovereign Power, the colonies pay their own way. They are self-sufficient, from an economic point of view, and every year the subsidy they give France is increasing. France receives from the colonies more than she contributes to the civil expenses of the more backward ones, and thus is in a favourable position. The financial position of the French colonies, especially in view of their relation to the mother-country, is at basis sound, even if it is at present unduly confused by the distribution of colonial accounts between several Ministries. In the main, the position may be easily summarized. The colonies pay all civil expenses, while the State bears the cost of defence: small grants are made from the one to the other in certain cases, but that is the general position,—a gratifying contrast with the burden of central charges which France had to meet in the nineties.

But whether France realizes that such financial independence is leading in the direction of a distinctively colonial point of view is another question. The colonies are perceiving that they can stand by themselves, and any such attitude must exert an influence on their general relations with the metropolis. The reflex side of France's success in the budgetary matter is thus an increased dogmatism on the part of the colonies, which view their gains in this direction in much the same light as the British colonies regarded the increased powers of their Legislative Assemblies. But, on the whole, the situation is decidedly good. It is, of course, easy to discern its weaknesses. The above-mentioned confusion of accounts is not helpful: nor, as the post-war crisis showed in Algeria and elsewhere, was the financial strength of the individual colonies as great as was supposed: nor again is it clear what provision has been made to meet colonial loans: but, these difficulties to the contrary, the general principles of the situation remain. France, it must be re-asserted (for this is one of the few successful features of French colonization), has undoubtedly solved the budgetary problem by allowing even the most backward native-country to settle its own civil charges, while she took the military costs on her own shoulders, subject always to the acceptance of any contribution that she deemed the colony strong enough to afford.

## CHAPTER XVII

### A COMPARATIVE STUDY

THE starting-point of any comparative study of French colonization must be to note the peculiar position in which France stood from the commencement. The whole of French colonial organization was coloured by certain influences which did not come in so clearly with any other Power. In the first place, France was not under the same imperious necessity of colonizing as was England. She was not sea-girt and confined to a small area : her population was not increasing at a menacing rate : and she did not experience overweening difficulties in feeding her people. Up to the twentieth century, Gambetta's point of view was supreme on this matter. That astute Meridional saw that " a policy of conserving and maintaining our patrimony " was quite sufficient, because France found her stationary population adequately supported by her agriculture and was not as primarily industrial as was England.<sup>1</sup> Colonization therefore, while a matter of economic life and death to England, was to France only an outlet for her energies. So much was this so that, at first, French theorists agreed with Bismarck that it was a weakening vice of a great nation. It was an unwise dispersion of the country's resources, weakening at the moment and producing but a dubious return in the future. This feeling provided one basis for that anti-colonialism which always influenced and, up to Etienne's reorganization in the early nineties, dominated French colonization. So far, then, the argument stood thus. French life was so many-sided and so rural that there was no grave economic problem, so that colonization remained at the best a somewhat dubious investment and at the worst an almost treacherous waste of the country's wealth. In any case, it was a venture not directly connected with the problem of national welfare. It was only a hazard—Mexico over again—expressing the pent-up exuberance of the Gallican spirit or a nation chafing under the grind of its conventional life. But, as a duty, as a necessity, or even as a strengthening investment, colonization remained unknown. Even in the period of militaristic expansion in the nineties, this outlook did not change. Africa remained simply a *jeu d'armes*, and, when Fashoda clouded the horizon, the issue was not

<sup>1</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 2/12/81.

so much colonial as a mere changed provenance of international rivalries : it might as easily have been Pendjeh or Verdun or Fiume. Colonial efforts might be an admirable military training, but how could fights against Samory or Ahmadou or the pirates of Upper Tonkin affect the destinies of the nation ? If France won new provinces, she held reviews at the Invalides and felt justified, but, in the main, that was all.

But the events of the nineties slowly caused a change, at least in the minds of the minority that counted. The public, and even the colonials who found expression in *L'Afrique Française* (1891 on) or *La Quinzaine Coloniale* (1897 on), might still interpret Africa in terms of military patrols, but Etienne had taken up the work of Ferry and, over and above his dreams of a vast African Empire, employed a point of view that was primarily thinking in terms of trade. More, trade was coming to be mainly a matter of raw materials. The selling of manufactured goods was the lesser task, getting rubber and oils and other tropical products the major. Only when this perception arose could France be said to have a colonial policy, and, when these considerations were once grasped, other factors, metropolitan indifference and the rule of the *bureaux*, for instance, had come in.

Because of this belated realization of the functions of colonization in the industrial world, France suffered. She did not really enter the colonial race until the nineties, and by that time the temperate regions had all been occupied and, even in Africa, only isolated coastal portions and the vast desert interior remained. Hence the amorphous nature of her huge African Empire, hence the lack of natural frontiers and compactness, hence the vast proportion of useless territory, good only for colouring the map. France obtained the second Empire of the world by seizing the world's bad-lands, and even these would not have been obtained had the nineties not seen a militarist triumph at home. That was the second factor in France's colonial stand,—that, as a result of the failure to view colonization as an integrally national problem, she had to take mainly inhospitable tropical lands.

At this point, two factors coalesced. The position of these tardily acquired colonies forbade European settlement, and so colonies on the model of the English Dominions were out of the question. But France did not want such colonies, even could she have had them. Her citizens in the main did not want to emigrate, and national policy was to stop the trickle of emigration to the New World and to keep the French nationals at home producing food or making manufactured goods. Admitting that the South-East offers no opportunity, the argument ran, the persons driven out of here can go north within France. "Internal colonization" could solve their problem. Or, if they could not be kept from leaving



France, there was Algeria, which was neither a colony nor a mainland *département*—simply a piece of France at a distance from the mother-country and endowed with certain colonial attributes. But the remainder could be kept at home, even in the unlikely event of a rapidly increasing population. France's attitude on this matter was exactly that of the Japanese,—to have the spheres of influence outside the metropolis provide the necessary food, raw materials, and markets, and to offer safety and employment even to an increasing home population. This is diametrically opposed to the British idea of forming new societies overseas, and even to the German theory which confused the two aspects of emigration and raw materials, as the position of Germany demanded both outlets. France, to the contrary, like Japan, viewed the mother-country as a machine, and the colonies as feeders. Emigration on any large scale was therefore out of the question, both as a matter of policy and because of the pressure of facts: and France could easily understand Japan's desire to absorb her 800,000 additional people every year by drawing supplies and markets from the colonies and thus providing work for the new hands in the metropolis itself. Such a concept was a natural offshoot of the growing industrialization of the two nations concerned, and viewed the country as a vast economic machine which, to keep from disintegration, had to produce more and more every year. Then, when the mainland population of France began its steady decline in the years from 1871 to 1911, the desired theory received another support. Dispersion of the country's human wealth under such conditions,—in other words, emigration,—became almost a treachery to the nation, and the relentless facts of the Census-reports joined the preconceived theory to sever the idea of emigration from that of colonization in French minds.

This orientation naturally involved the last characteristic of French colonial policy,—the conscious subordination of every colonial matter to the interests of the metropolis. The spirit of the *Pacte Colonial*, beyond the possibility of thought in the British colonial system after 1840, has always dominated the French concept,—and never more than in the twentieth century. Colonial subordination remains the central fact in French overseas effort,—a fact that cannot be too strongly emphasized, because it determines the whole of French colonial policy. Reduced to fundamentals, the French system is simply subordination. The colony exists only to strengthen the mother-land: its own strength is to be fostered as a distinct aim, only to the degree to which it secures an added advantage to France. As Harmand said, the colonial problem is to draw from the colonies the maximum of advantage for the minimum of inconvenience, and, even if Sarraut added to this a belief that, in so doing, the native welfare might be secured, the fundamental attitude

remains the same. The colonies were thus to be subordinated as a matter of general principle: that was the function of a colony, that was the relation it should bear to the mother-country. Moreover—and here entered a different set of factors—that was the relationship and the method most in accord with the spirit of French life. It reflected the centralization that is the natural attribute of French administration, it necessitated that uniformity which is the keynote of French governmental life, it allowed that domination from Paris which permeates every phase of French activities.

A definite colonial theory once more united with natural French inclinations,—this time in the direction of refusing any right of development to a colony wherever situated, and demanding the utmost degree of bureaucratic centralization. The English idea of a colony as a society, or the theory that rulers of native countries should have as free a hand as possible, was thus rejected. France stood firm for the position that, as far as possible, a colony should be governed like a mainland *département* and, in any case, by French officials directly responsible to Paris in every way. Even for the most recently acquired Crown Colony, the English never employed the first part of this theory and allowed a greater degree of decentralization for the second, at least to the extent of giving the Governor a freer hand. France stood alone in carrying the two parts of this policy to extremes and in combining them in a single theory: no other colonial Power has so indissolubly linked the ideas of extreme assimilation and centralization. These two always remained, despite the flitting of various native theories across the Parisian stage: the surface might change, the basic administrative structure and ideas went on as ever,—especially the theory of executive dominance and the untrammelled control of the Parisian departments. These phases stamped French activities with an unmistakable mark from the first, and have consistently formed a part of French colonization.

France thus went overseas with definite ideas and definite dispositions of mind, and these have remained, however much other theories have emerged or conditions in the colonies themselves have changed. She went out, not for colonies of settlement, but for economic strongholds: she did not want new societies, but mere extensions of the administrative machine offering increased advantages for the larger responsibilities that she was undertaking: and under these conditions, she saw no necessity for a colonial growth wider than the development of a *département* at home, or for a means of control or a point of view other than those, say, in Auvergne or Picardy. The same administrative methods and the same centralized officialdom were to apply; and there was no concept of a view-point specially orientated towards colonial conditions. And this

applied to all colonies alike, to Equatorial Africa with its handful of French officials and to Algeria with its 750,000 Europeans. For was it not in Algeria that the theory reached its apex? Was it not there that, by the system of *rattachements*, all colonial services were immediately subordinated to Paris? And that prefects and sub-prefects and departmental councils were transplanted from any *département* of France? And that even the *Code Civil* was introduced? There was no differentiation between the colonies, and, in the French view, no need for any. Differences in practice had to emerge, that was evident; but each was grudgingly admitted as an exception to a desirable rule, as with a recognition of the Moslem officials in Algeria or the mandarins in Indo-China. But the theory went on.

These ideas predominated in every discussion of the colonial question in France, and their gist at least was reinforced by the events of the twentieth century. The definite linking of the country's destinies with those of the colonies during the war-years made the colonial question national, but only in the sense of making France realize that she *had* to have colonial men and money and markets. That is, subordination had to be continued and even increased. It might be conceded that there was a newer point of view favouring native improvement and that the desirability of differences in colonization was at last recognized; but, despite these two changes, the ideas of colonial subordination and centralization remained, and, coupled with them, the system of executive supremacy,—or what this means in a French system, a large degree of the old uniformity. The fringes of the colonial *régime* changed, its methods were adapted to the newer circumstances, but the old basis, the frame of mind that emerged in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, still continued in its essentials. It always has been, and *is*, French colonization policy,—subordination, centralization, uniformity, officialdom.

The most obvious contrast with this point of view is the British idea of colonization. This, it must be admitted, was largely determined by the geographical situation of the early English colonies and by the population-position of the British Isles: but there is a quite different frame of mind behind these material factors. Conditions played a large part, but disposition or national temperament also counted. But it should be remembered that there is a fundamental distinction between the Dominions and the native lands or Crown Colonies and protectorates. Properly speaking, the Dominions should be compared only with Algeria; yet, on the other hand, a wider comparison is legitimate, because running through the whole of British policy, a certain general outlook may be traced.

The first contrast with France is in connection with emigration. During the centuries, England has colonized for purposes of settlement. She wanted to establish new communities of overseas Britons, both to relieve the pressure of home-population and to safeguard her food supplies. The need for raw materials did not enter as an important element until the close of the nineteenth century, nor was there any trace of that other French idea that overseas establishments existed in part to provide outlets for the growing official caste of the metropolis. The idea, to the contrary, was that outlined for Algeria by Prévost-Paradol in 1868,—that colonization meant the emergence of new societies overseas. But this idea was so unusual in France that Prévost-Paradol's *La Nouvelle France* has become a kind of myth, adding a touch of idealism on the horizon of the colonial world. It is a dream divorced from practice,—a touching and very beautiful dream, to be coupled with the perennially popular *Marie Chappdelaine* of Louis Hémon, but something quite out of accord with the colonial process as it goes on in practice. The Frenchman likes to have his emotions pleasantly and yet painfully raked by such a *Träumerei*: he dreams of Frenchmen overrunning new provinces, of the farms of *la douce France* there, of *la gloire*, of the spread of French civilization, until he realizes that colonization as he knows it is a question of tropical heat and bush nostalgia and recalcitrant natives. Prévost-Paradol was a pipe-dreamer, and his smoke-wreathed visions have found reflections only in the novels of Louis Bertrand. France toys with the concept of colonies as societies, but invariably brushes it from her mind when the practical question rises. Save in Northern Algeria, and for a time in New Caledonia, she neither had nor desired this end for her colonizing efforts.

She was not concerned with the emigration aspect, and has made no real effort even to attract capitalists to the colonies beyond North Africa. Feillet's scheme in New Caledonia, for instance, the only other part of the Empire in which a European labouring-class can live, failed for lack of official support, and the same could be said of the larger scale colonization of Madagascar and Indo-China. The African colonies, while offering nothing to small or even large settlers, still left a scope for the utilization of private capital, but even that was passed over. France did not wish to be concerned with overseas emigration, and it is a mistake to explain this away in terms of the tropical nature of her land. The real cause lay far deeper: nor was it concerned, as has been somewhat recklessly supposed, with the inability of the French to colonize as individuals. The survival of French Canada alone would give the lie to such an assertion: and isolated Frenchmen were to be found in the earliest days on the furthest pampas of the Argentine and the back-

stations of Australia. The cause for the failure in question (if it could be termed a failure) lay with the fact that mainland France was under-peopled and, all through the years of the Third Republic, was becoming increasingly so. As the industrialization of the north went on apace, the labour-shortage became more and more manifest. Any drainage of man-power from France was therefore directly weakening, and, even if it only went to the French colonies, the sense of loss was still there,—not as keen, of course, as if it had gone to the La Plata or to Upper Canada, but still discernible.

Therefore, apart from Algeria, with its 750,000 French subjects, the entire overseas Empire of France has only 1,044,000 European settlers, the great bulk of them officials. There has been practically no *peuplement* and no drain from the mother-country, as in the case of Germany and Great Britain. All of the French possessions are doomed to be overwhelmingly native lands, so that France can know nothing of that basic division in the British Empire between settlement-lands and native-lands. The absence of this has given a unitary basis to French colonization, and hence allows it to be more clearly defined than, say, the British system. It also provides one (but only one) explanation for the contrast between the French emphasis on subordination and the British on autonomy. This cannot, it must be noted, be explained away by saying that France has no lands of settlement; it goes deeper, and the habit is so ingrained that it extends, in a suitable form, even to Britain's native lands, whereas France has provided no vestige of autonomy on native lines, save for certain embryonic councils in the interior of West Africa. It is not the result of circumstances alone: the general direction of colonial effort varies in the two cases, and, with it, the methods.

Nor is this quite the same thing as the next difference between France and England in this regard. The French emphasize the national point of view in the sense of the central organization, whereas England tends to view the colonies, the Dominions naturally and even the Crown Colonies to a lesser degree, as societies, evolving their own lives and interests. This is naturally largely a result of the emigration aspect, but it goes beyond it. It is inconceivable, for example, to think that France could reject schemes of Imperial Preference in the same way that free-trade England has done: contrast the tariff-system set up in 1892 and the *mise en valeur* scheme of the post-war years—projects which carry the idea of an Imperial *Zollverein* to its logical limit. The French carry this to the extent of denying, or at least minimizing, the special interests of the colonies, and consider only the interests of "the French nation," which is a thinly veiled euphemism for "the metropolis." The *Pacte Colonial*, changing its details as conditions alter, always goes on in some

form or other. The English, on the other hand, emphasize the local interests of the colonies to such a degree that the very concept of a federated Imperial trading organization has never been admitted. In so far as trade is concerned, the colonies have been developing as nations, freed from shackles since the abolition of the Navigation Acts in 1849,—so much so that the Chamberlain schemes to re-link them with the metropolis were resolutely opposed, and more, be it noted, by the mother-country than by the colonies. To France, this is colonial theory perverted to the degree of ludicrousness. Even discounting the influence of the free-traders, a further distinction between the English and French outlooks is present. England considers the colonial problem as multiple (hence the colonies were allowed to arrange their own trade-treaties with foreign nations), France as unitary. England deals with a number of young organisms, France with outflung limbs of the central organism. The societal point of view does not enter French colonization, and least of all in the direction of considering each colony as a unit distinct from the others: they do not admit the idea even of one undifferentiated colonial society, still less that *each* colonial society may vary. On the other hand, the French point of view that colonies, whether as developed as Algeria or as rude as Equatorial Africa, exist only as parts of a central problem, is unknown in the history of British colonization.

The next distinction (though all of these are allied) is that between the centralization of France and the decentralization of Great Britain,—and here we reach fundamentals. At this point, the above-mentioned attitudes of the French are reinforced and unified by the dominating force in French life—administrative centralization, a force that commands the colonies just as it does the metropolis. The denial of autonomy or the societal point of view may have arisen separately, as has been seen above; but they are clinched and, in last resort, made inevitable by the centralizing view-point. Here we have the basic distinction of direction and method between the efforts of the two great Colonial Powers. They stand poles apart in this regard, so much so that their outlooks can in no sense be reconciled. The one believes in centralization as rigidly as it may be conceived, the other in the maximum degree of devolution that is compatible with the maintenance of the Empire. The difference has been best summed up by a German authority, Rudolf Asmis, whose views were endorsed by Sarraut. In Asmis' words (and he had had a long African experience):—

“While in the English system, centrifugal tendencies are always splitting the empire up into numerous centres, French Africa offers a spectacle exactly the opposite,—the application of a method of continued fusion and concen-

tration spread over long years in a systematic and persevering way. It is a method to which apparently the natives lend themselves with a good grace, and which they willingly adopt, even if the first years are marked by armed upheavals in the interior regions." <sup>2</sup>

That is, the one system centralizes by its very nature, the other means local control: and this is as characteristic of purely native possessions as of dominions. It is not the difference between a British Dominion and a French colony: it is the separate method applied, say, in the adjacent West African colonies of the two Powers. In French West Africa, for instance, there is undoubtedly a pure direct rule. The land is divided into *cercles* or administrative subdivisions, ninety-eight in all, the affairs of each being controlled to the smallest detail by a French administrator. Equatorial Africa has the same directness of control: it has forty-four *cercles* with Europeans at the head, and 164 smaller divisions with either a European lieutenant or a native-associate at the head of each.<sup>3</sup> The only part played by the natives is in a few advisory councils set up in the Volta region in the past three years, and still viewed as an astounding experiment in liberalism, but as a kind of toy somewhat apart from the serious work of administration. France has no indirect rule anywhere, except with the mandarins of Indo-China (and we have seen how stormy has been their history) and the *caïds* of parts of North Africa. British Africa, to the contrary, has been the home of indirect rule, both in the sense of utilizing native officials and of developing along native lines. Nigeria has its policy determined by British Residents and the general work of administration overlooked by them: but the ordinary system of rule is by powerful native chiefs and councils, which have the power of drafting local budgets and imposing taxes.<sup>4</sup> A similar system pertains in the British territories in East and Central Africa, and especially in the Bantu lands of the South, where the powers of the chiefs and councils make possible a genuine self-government on native models. All of this is unknown in French Africa. The French insist on the maintenance of all power in the hands of the European executive officials. There is centralization within each colony, and the corollary of a centralized relationship between the colony and France. The *bureaux* extend their paramountcy, their immediate control even, to every sphere; and the colonial history of France since 1880 has been a

<sup>2</sup> *Preussische Jahrbücher*, Dec. 1921, in Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, p. 90, note. Compare J. Harmand, *Domination et Colonisation* (1910), p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> For denial of part to natives, see Van Vollenhoven in *Journal Officiel de l'Afrique Occidentale Française*, 18/8/17,—“there cannot be two authorities in the *cercle*, native and French, there is only one!”

<sup>4</sup> For this difference, see E. Baillaud, *La Politique Indigène de l'Angleterre en Afrique Occidentale* (1912), pp. 540–546.

constant alternation between offers of an illusory decentralization and renunciations of those offers. To mention a few of the outstanding instances in this undulating movement, there were the Algerian *rattachements*, the restoration of the Governor-General's powers under Cambon, the tighter hold of the *bureaux* at the close of the century, the budgetary autonomy of 1900, the centralization of 1905-1911, Lebrun's decentralization in the next three years, the increased uniformity during the War, the dabbling with newer theoretical tendencies after 1915 when colonial technicians were reconsidering the whole situation, and the subordination *in excelsis* of the Sarraut plan. It is a monotonous tale of delusion, with the old centralization running through the whole and never seriously attacked.<sup>5</sup> Sarraut can write to-day as Cambon did forty years ago, and parts of their complaints are practically interchangeable. Each small concession was always followed by a more than commensurate reaction, and centralization,—in other words, the control of the permanent executive,—remained the dominant force.

This leads to the fourth general distinction between French and British efforts. The one system is limited to, and never goes beyond, the executive officials. This applies, it should be noted, as much to the determination of policy as to the execution of details. The Parisian *bureaux* have all the powers exercised by the British Colonial Office over the Crown Colonies, and in addition, a practical freedom from outside control in the determination of policy. The officials are everything in colonial policy. Save for the exercise of Parliamentary patronage and various legislative pronouncements more or less out of touch with the actualities of colonial life, they are a self-sufficient oligarchy. The Minister of Finance interferes from his side, but, even so, only on general points, and in such a way that his Commission must rely on the *bureaux*. France does not know the reality of Parliamentary control or interference in colonial matters in the same way as Great Britain.<sup>6</sup> One advantage of a *régime* of decrees is that the great part of ordinary administration is placed outside the likelihood of discussion in the Legislature: it never comes to their ears, and the only fields open to the politicians are those where general principles are concerned, as with the enfranchisement of the Algerians in 1919. Going through the colonial annals of France, it is astonishing to find how little Parliament has intervened. The members are usually bored by the prodigiously long budget-reports on the colonies and are only too pleased to have this task over. That means that colonial matters in the main are relegated to the Ministry, and, within the Ministry,

<sup>5</sup> Good analysis in Regismanset, *Questions Coloniales* (1923), Vol. I, pp. 218, 219.

<sup>6</sup> Bluyssen, "Le Rôle et les Pouvoirs du Ministère des Colonies," in *Colonies et Marine*, Oct. 1920, pp. 580-583.



the force of circumstances means the supremacy of the permanent officials. Party changes in France are so frequent, and the Ministry of the Colonies so uniformly despised and relegated to the least important Minister, that any other result would have been surprising. In the last thirty years, only one Minister of the Colonies in France had any previous colonial experience or was an important politician at the moment he assumed office. Not for nothing was the Minister of the Colonies termed the Wandering Jew of the Cabinet. The recipient almost invariably viewed it as an unwelcome *pis aller*, the alternative to being excluded altogether from the Cabinet: and, since his main consideration was to vacate it as soon as possible, it was not unnatural that the Minister usually interfered little. It is a moot point to what extent an interested and capable Minister *could* dominate the situation. So deep-rooted is the French system that only one Minister, Sarraut, tried extensive reforms, but his reforms coincided so aptly with the spirit of the nation for the time being that he encountered little opposition. Usually, it may be said, the officials within the Ministry have the work of deciding the issues that arise. This position clearly does not pertain in England. There, the impress of the Minister is clearer and more immediate, and there, too, Parliamentary interference is by no means of a purely academic significance.<sup>7</sup>

Nor does France know the various Councils and outside agencies that influence colonial policy in England, nor has she articulate colonies at the other end, as England has. In the colonies themselves, the outlook towards the officials and towards executive control is different in both systems. In a French colony the officials *are* the colony. Take, for instance, Cochinchina, which is an instance favouring the French, if anything, because of the large degree of outside commerce that is possible. There, the colony is notoriously official-ridden,—so much so that their grip on colonial life was one of the specific instances most adduced against the system of assimilation. They provided the majority at the elections, they chose the representatives to the French Parliament, they determined the taxes and allocated the proceeds, and they consigned the natives to outside oblivion and the traders to a position in which they were tolerated as necessary evils. Again, contrast Fiji and New Caledonia,—an instance again favouring France, because, since the time of Sir Arthur Gordon fifty years ago, Fiji has notoriously been one of the most sterilely official of the British Crown Colonies, whereas New Caledonia has one of the largest European populations of

<sup>7</sup> The position of the Ministry is analysed by a series of articles in *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, 1/9/10–1/11/10. Regismanset's accounts, especially a study of 1904, are the most analytical.

the French colonies and has been favoured with a succession of reforming Governors. Yet, despite this, New Caledonia cannot be said to have a community-spirit other than the official. The official is everywhere, from the gendarme in the native reserve to the multitudes of clerkly workers in Nouméa. No other class finds adequate expression, yet, in Fiji, the trading and planting classes are articulate and even the Indian immigrants noisily give vent to their grievances.

This difference is aided in the French colonies by the absence of effective Legislative Councils and by the presence of a proletariat of European officials, unknown in the British system in its tropical lands. The British leave their minor work to natives: the French employ Europeans receiving two or three pounds a week,—an anomaly that has arisen because of the inordinate part patronage plays in the duties of the Minister of the Colonies, and because the French have up till recently denied opportunity to the natives. However this may be, it is calculated that, under similar conditions, France employs three times as many colonial officials as the British.<sup>8</sup> Most of these are underpaid (before the War, for instance, a cadet in India received three times as much as the average official in Indo-China), and, of necessity, those in the lower ranks are of dubious qualifications and poor quality. The able Frenchman does not go overseas to a tropical land for a salary of £150 or £200, and the colonial service in general is not viewed as one of the peaks of the official world, as, for instance, the Indian Civil Service is in England. This fact explains many things,—the comparative sterility of French officialdom, the throttling of colonial points of view, the exorbitant charges of the official *régime* in the annual budgets (a quarter of the annual receipts in Indo-China!) and the grip of the officials on every side of colonial existence. England relies on fewer officials in native countries, but insists on a higher class, and, as far as possible, leaves routine work for native auxiliaries. Then, having reliable officials, she allows them power, whereas, as has been seen in the section dealing with “*inspection*,” France insists above all things on retaining central control and making official action mechanical. Even the Governors-General are regulated in every way, and practically the only free agent in French

<sup>8</sup> *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, 25/5/99 p. 298. The position in 1900 was thus:—

Senegal .	620	officials to	470	colonists
Sudan .	107	..	184	
Guinea .	241		42	
Ivory Coast	398		52	
Dahomey	363		33	
Congo .	580		78	
Guiana .	521	..	579	

Martinique had 973, Guadeloupe 1,152, and Réunion 904 officials.

colonization was de Lanessan in Indo-China in 1891, and he was recalled in ignominy for daring to use the powers given him! Every measure to give more freedom to local Governors has been repulsed, and one of the leading planks in the platform of the reformers is still to allow the Governors a freer hand in deciding purely local matters. France deluges a colony with officials, allows them to stifle the development of the colony in any but the orthodox direction of officialdom, and yet refuses to give them any freedom of action. None of these three attributes can be taken to represent the English outlook. In the British colonial world the executive is controlled from outside: the Colonial Office, while checking policy, allows a greater freedom to its Governors: there are fewer officials, but they have a higher status and greater powers as individuals: and their outlook is in general wider, as they consider other interests than the purely official,—such as the trading.<sup>9</sup> The basic principle is different in each case, and the fact that certain British Crown Colonies,—in the Far East and the Pacific, for instance,—may be named as approximating rather closely to the French idea of control by an official caste does not affect the general distinction.

As a result of these general influences, differing as they do in each case, there have emerged what might be called the French and British norms in the colonial world. The French commence by emphasizing the executive and central control, and never go beyond that stage. The most developed colony, like the newest, is to remain under the Parisian *bureaux*. Native colonies in general are to be governed by exclusively French officials, nominated from Paris and responsible to Paris, the degree of responsibility being as pronounced for a Governor as for the least of the officials. The natives are to be governed but not heard, and France, *mirabile dictu*, still has no native councils in this age when native administration is defined in terms of indirect rule. There are a few embryonic local councils in the Niger region of West Africa, and panels of natives in the joint assemblies of the larger colonies; but, beyond such purely advisory and minor participation, the natives in general are not taken into co-partnership, as they are in the British colonies of Africa.

In the developed colonies, advisory councils are allowed. They are primarily to represent the French citizens, officials and settlers, although, in some colonies, like Algeria and Cochin-China, groups are given to the natives. Such colonial co-operation reaches its height in the Old Colonies, where there are Councils-General elected on universal suffrage, but in no case is there any real self-government. Such Councils are invariably to advise the Executive, but their advice may be passed over, either by

<sup>9</sup> *Colonies et Marine*, 30/6/20, p. 389 *et seq.*, for contrast of the two.

the local or the central officials. They are overridden by the Governor and the Council of State. The utmost concession is a kind of financial dyarchy. Certain "optional" expenses, the unimportant fringes without which administration can still go on, are placed under the immediate control of the Councils; but the others, the "obligatory" charges, remain under the executive, which also retains a right to override the Council's decisions even on the "optional" charges.<sup>10</sup> But this is an extreme measure, and usually the tendency in practice is to allow more and more items to come under the control of the Councils, provided always—and herein is the key to the system—that they behave themselves from the Administration's point of view! The most liberal aspect of French colonial theory is thus in those few privileged colonies where, solely as a result of constitutional conventions and not because of any specific Charter, a species of dual responsibility is admitted. The Governors in the Antilles, for instance, are responsible to the colonial Council for matters of purely local finance and local administration, and to the Ministry for general matters. But the significance of this is minimized when it is recognized that the *bureaux* retain power over all matters, and that they admit the co-operation of the Councils only as a tolerated privilege, liable to be overridden at any time in whole or in part. The colonial charter never goes beyond a tolerated control of certain financial matters: the executive can take charge of anything (though such retrogression would admittedly occasion turmoil in places like the sugar-islands and Algeria): the major economic matters,—tariffs for instance,—may not be mentioned by the Councils, and all manner of political discussions are entirely forbidden. Beyond this fragmentary concession, there is no other arrangement for colonial co-operation,<sup>11</sup> and, did not the *régime* in practice allow a considerable degree of deviation from this rigid principle, the position of the advanced colonies would be intolerable. Indeed, the position of Indo-China, even with the toleration allowed, is a marvel of retarded development.

In general, then, the hand of the executive, both local and central, is over everything in the French colonies, and that of the central executive in Paris is at all times over the local. Even the furthest flights of theory do not seem able to consider anything beyond a partly elected, partly nominated Council in the colonies, aiding but in no sense controlling the executive. Theorists tend rather to demand executive decentraliza-

<sup>10</sup> Dialère, *Traité de Législation Coloniale* (1906 edition), Vol. II, Chap. 7. Compare Chap. XVII, Part III, above.

<sup>11</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 9/12/20, for reorganization of West Africa in these directions, and Merlin's speech in *Colonies et Marine*, March 1922, p. 224, for as far as the French will go.

tion,—that is, a larger freedom of the local officials from interference by the *bureaux*. As Sarraut summed up this trend :—

“ We would speak of the work of decentralization which will give to the Governments of our main colonies a larger degree of administrative autonomy, a wider power of initiative and action, against which there will be, as checks, a strongly maintained control by the Ministry and by Parliament, and the existence of local representative organs in which French and native representatives, either in separate or mixed assemblies, will aid and control.”

But that is all, and it will be noted that this theory more than balances any concession by a corresponding degree of control. That is the most magnanimous Colonial Charter that is deemed possible, and even in this form it remains only the dream of reformers, having been expressed in almost the same words by the various theorists since Ferry's time. Ferry cried in 1892 that the colonial governments needed more autonomy : that position, despite the development in the interim, still remains. And, until this preliminary step of decentralization is taken, it seems useless to speak of effective colonial assemblies, which are thus doubly postponed. French colonial theory is not concerned at present with such assemblies.

The British, on the other hand, have a far different theory. Indeed, they have had a different direction from the first, although there is naturally a basic distinction between their lands of settlement and those destined only for the natives. For the former, the colonists are to be taken into co-partnership as soon as conditions warrant that privilege. From the initial stages in each colony, nominated Councils expressed the viewpoint of the colonists as against the executive officials. These Councils gradually became more representative and more sweeping in their criticisms, until a full stage of representative government was reached. Under this, the colonial Council criticized the executive and usually, as in the Australian colonies in the forties, advised on budgetary matters. Conditions were generally such as to make their advice largely a matter of control, as in New South Wales at the time of the Land Fund (1835) or the squatting taxes of 1844.<sup>12</sup> Then, when the time was deemed auspicious, the colony was given responsible government, which meant that the local executive became responsible only to the local legislature. Such responsible government, though at first limited, gradually assumed wider functions (for instance, control over land, immigration, tariffs), until the colony became a Dominion, that is, a partner of the metropolis in the British Commonwealth of Nations, the only link being the personal bond of the King. The colonies even came to have an embryonic control

<sup>12</sup> S. H. Roberts, *History of Australian Land Settlement* (1925), p. 215, or, full analysis in E. Sweetman, *Australian Constitutional Development* (1926).

over their foreign affairs, and in reality were independent nations, subject to the wider considerations of defence and diplomacy.

This system means that there are from the first certain diametric oppositions with the French standpoint. Decentralization is the basis of this scheme of development, as opposed to the protracted dominance of the *bureaux* in Paris. A local Parliament emerges as soon as possible, whereas France, even in lands like Algeria that are destined for hundreds of thousands of French settlers, will admit neither a Parliament nor a political Council nor even a controlling economic Council: she does not countenance anything beyond advisory economic Councils, although in practice such a Council may virtually decide most of the items in the Budget. The one form of colony thus receives responsible government without British control but with Governors linking England to the colonies and an Agent-General in London linking the colonies to England: while the other stands for rule by functionaries from France, and, with this supremacy of the executive, control from Paris. "*Organisation de Paris*" is the key-note of the whole,—or what Jules Delafosse called in the Deputies, "*Centralisation à outrance*"—coupled with "this abominable mania that we have in France of peopling our colonies with officials and of using them only as receptacles for the export of bureaucrats."<sup>13</sup> As a result, the Governor in the English system is largely an ornament in those colonies which have responsible government, and the central power of veto is practically nominal. In France, on the other hand, the Governor is invariably the working head of the administration, and the institution of veto dominates colonial matters. The Governor vetoes, the *bureau* vetoes, the Minister vetoes, the Council of State vetoes, the permanent Commissions veto, the other Ministries concerned veto, and Parliament vetoes. The French colonial system is thus a rising scale of negations. The French colony remains an administrative *bloc* governed like a part of mainland France, represented in the Paris Parliament like a piece of France, and with no more individual peculiarities than a part of France. The British is the exact contrary. It has no representation at Westminster and is in no sense governed like a county. It re-creates English institutions in miniature and starts a parallel development, with a Westminster of its own and a subordinate executive-class of its own. There are several Englands, as Seignobos concludes, but only one France,—a gradually expanding, but essentially unaltered, France.

As a further consequence of this, the English colony comes to have its own budget and a real financial independence. Indeed, it partly achieves this long before it reaches the stage of responsible government. In Australia, New South Wales had a budget early in last century, and,

<sup>13</sup> *Journal Officiel*, Deps., 27/11/90, pp. 2284-5.

once approved by the Governor and the Legislative Council, even though the Council was nominally only an advisory one, this budget stood. Such matters as emigration and land-revenues were partly relegated to the control of the Minister at home, or, what this meant, to that unique body of armchair-theorists, the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners. But, even with these wider matters, the colonies came to usurp and hold a considerable degree of control. For instance, the excess land-revenue (after certain charges were met) fell to the Council, and the active help given to immigrants largely depended on the attitude of the local Council. That is why emigration differed, say, in New South Wales and South Australia. In last resort, the Governor could, and, if he were a strong man like Sir George Gipps, *did*, override the Council; but usually, when the two were not in conflict, the amount of control exercised by the Council was a considerable one and extended to the ordinary round of administration.

In the French colonies under similar circumstances, the Governor draws up the Budget and the local body approves; but the fundamental part is with the officials in the colony or in Paris. The only exceptions to this are in Algeria and the *anciennes colonies*, where effective control is conceded to the Council in most ordinary matters. But usually, the Budget may be altered by the executive at every stage, despite the so-called cession of budgetary autonomy in 1900. This was not budgetary autonomy in the English sense so much as the right of having local budgets—quite a different matter, and one granted to the English colonies in Australia almost as soon as they were established. The budgets of the British colonies with responsible government have nothing to do with the British official world or the Parliament at Westminster, and the Dominions may even please themselves as to what military contribution, if any, they make to the Empire. Even the budgets of the Crown Colonies are in practice controlled by the local executive, although the Colonial Office could here interfere in detail if it so desired. The British Parliament does not receive budget-reports on the separate colonies, as does the French. Every year the Deputies and Senate hear extensive reports on the separate colonies and decide their budgets. Nor are these mere divisions of the general budget. There is no one budget-speech in France but several, not one budget but many. The “Budget-Report, Service of Algeria,” for example, is distinct, and deals with every detail of Algerian administration for the ensuing year: and it is in the drafting and amending of this that the *bureaux* and the Houses retain their immediate control over colonial affairs. Great Britain knows nothing of this procedure. The self-governing colonies look after themselves, and the Minister of the Colonies receives a general appropriation, interfering in

the local budgets of the Crown Colonies only in the case of financial crisis. The colonies make no specific contributions to the British budget, nor do they usually receive grants: the French do both. Every detail of colonial finance is under the closest surveillance of both the Parisian officials and, if they so pleased, the legislators; and the *service d'inspection* includes both travelling and fixed central officials who report on the smallest detail of finance. It is in these directions that the natural tendency of the French to centralize finds its strongest expression in the colonial field.<sup>14</sup>

The point most strongly insisted upon in the financial field is that the tariff-system may not in any wise be determined by the French colony. That is essentially a metropolitan prerogative, essentially a national matter. Thus, France stood as strongly for tariff-subordination, even for colonies in the position of Indo-China and Algeria, as Britain does for tariff-autonomy. The issue was finally decided in the British colonies in 1872, when it was ruled that the colonies could not only fix their own tariff systems but could even discriminate against British goods. Later, the Dominions were even allowed to make trade-treaties against Britain. Canada and the United States, for instance, might arrange a treaty by which certain British goods were virtually to be boycotted, and the British representative, having had nothing to do with the negotiations, would be called upon to sign the treaty so arranged. Practically all of the British colonies, even the Crown Colonies which were still directly controlled by the Colonial Office, adopted protectionist systems as opposed to the free-trade of the metropolis. This is inconceivable under the French *régime*: there, the colonies are subordinated, their interests are purely secondary, they have not the slightest voice in the determination of the fiscal *régime*, and, save for a brief interlude from 1833 to 1848 in three colonies, never have had.<sup>15</sup> They simply carry out the policy determined by metropolitan Frenchmen for the interests of metropolitan Frenchmen. There is no secret about this: such a procedure is completely in harmony with the French theory of the rôle a colony should play; and this is the main field in which colonial protests are forbidden from the first. Indeed, the only protests were in the campaign for "tariff-personality" before the war-years, and even then, the aim was more to have the tariff influenced by varying local conditions than to hand its determination over to the individual colonies. But this campaign died out, and the issue has never been heard of again.

Tariff-subordination is one of the bases of the post-war policy of France, and the colony's interests are deliberately and of set purpose ignored, however much they may suffer thereby. Never since the

<sup>14</sup> See Chap. XVI, Part III, *ante*.

<sup>15</sup> See Chap. II, *ante*.



Navigation Act has England had anything approaching the French law of tariff-assimilation (1892), even for the Crown Colonies ; nor has there been anything like the restrictions imposed on Algerian shipping since the old days when the English overseas establishments were viewed as " plantations." The French stand for one huge *Zollverein* (not a union of equally developing parts, but of one centre and several outside subsidiaries), while the British have frequently rejected any system of Imperial Preference, even in its most innocuous form. As a corollary of this, industries in the British colonies are allowed to develop, even against those of Great Britain ; whereas, in France, they are repressed if they compete with the metropolis. There, as in Tonkin, industries were for long discouraged, because they might conceivably clash with the interests of the French manufacturers at home, and because, moreover, it was not in accord with the dictates of a sound colonial policy to allow any colony to become too strong or self-sufficient. The latter part of this attitude, it must be admitted, has lost much of its force in the past few years, but the former remains as strong as ever.

It might perhaps be asserted that these vitally different theories arose because England had Dominions and France only colonies of exploitation. But that assertion evades certain facts, because the changes are not merely in methods differing with certain material circumstances. They go further and concern the ultimate direction and point of view. Even comparing colonies on an equality, as, for instance, the above-mentioned lands in West Africa, conspicuous differences emerge. There is not the same excessive centralization in the British colonies. The local Governors and the Residents each have wider powers, and the immediate control of London is less, and is confined to questions of general policy rather than ordinary matters of administrative detail. But the French official is nothing more than a cog in a machine. " They will bring with them that passion for uniformity, that mania for routine, that love for making regulations, that regard for form, that dread of initiative and of responsibilities which crush the mother-country as well as the most vigorous of our colonies." <sup>16</sup>

Then again, both Powers approach the native problem differently. As has been seen, since indirect rule has been the accepted British method, —that is, since about 1905,—the native rulers have as much power as possible, and the Resident is more and more behind the scenes. All of Nigeria, for instance, is covered with native councils deciding local questions ; whereas, until 1925, the French had none of these and still do not believe in them. The natives have a wider scope in Nigeria and, even where this is curtailed, their traditions and customs are given con-

<sup>16</sup> J. Chailley-Bert, *The Colonisation of Indo-China* (1894), p. x.

sideration. Justice and administration in British West Africa are not as impregnated with the details of metropolitan practice as in the French possessions. Despite the recent changes, the civil code of French Africa largely retains the ideas of the *Code Civil*; that of the British lands is based on native customs, save those that are anti-social or employ methods that could not possibly be sanctioned under a civilized administration. The Code is made to fit the local conditions and is such that the natives can understand it. But even local native-courts are a comparatively recent innovation in French West Africa. In this sense, indirect rule has been a material part of British colonial policy for twenty years; but, in France, though partly accepted in theory under the guise of the theory of association, it has remained distinct from administrative routine, save for certain more or less spectacular exceptions. The French retain the essential view-point of direct rulers, and, where they must, utilize native officials only as a *pis aller*, as subservient aids to direct rule, to be employed only because there are not enough French officials.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, native customs, as in Indo-China and West Africa, have to fight their way to recognition, and often, as in Kabylie and the Pacific lands and Cochin-China, are completely repressed.

The general difference between the two colonial policies may best be seen in this attitude towards the natives. There, England and France, as has been seen, stand poles apart. The French come more into contact with native life. They impregnate themselves with the traditions and thought and peculiarities of the native mind, and endeavour to understand. The English, on the other hand, stand aloof. They have no Delafosse, no Robert Randau, no novels of the *grande brousse* school. Such delvings into the mysteries of native psychology have little attraction for them, and it was not until recent years that there was even an agitation to train all British officials in anthropology,—and it still remains an agitation. Contrast with this the extensive courses on comparative anthropology and on every phase of native life at the *École Coloniale* in Paris. The French, in consequence of this training, turn out officials who are in a position to understand and synthesize the many contradictory phases of native existence. Then the individual, thus attuned by his training to a sympathetic understanding of native idiosyncrasies, finds himself helped by his Latin temperament. The French draw no colour-line and accept the fact of race-difference rather than that of any innate racial inferiority. Hence the tolerant attitude towards miscegenation in the French lands. This is in no sense associated with that biting

<sup>17</sup> Contrast, for example, the points of view in Van Vollenhoven and Merlin, *op. cit.*, and that of Lugard, in *Étude de Colonisation Comparée* (Franck, 1925), pp. 36-41.

contumely with which the phrase "gone native" is regarded in British colonies. Nor is the *métis*, the offspring of such relationships, denied a place in the community. He follows his father's status, if recognized by him, and can, certain technical difficulties notwithstanding, obtain the rights of citizenship. In English lands, the case is far different, and the half-caste falls into an outer position which leaves no scope for him, either with the old or the new. Again, such a device as the "mixed battalions" which the French have in Morocco cannot be imagined in any English colony. In them, French conscripts and native soldiers are mingled indiscriminately. It is not that separate platoons of French and natives co-operate as fighters in a wider unit: they are dispersed amongst the same platoons, living every detail of their lives in common and with absolutely no differential treatment or privacy. The system is the negation of racial difference,—a reduction to one level, that of the lowest. On a par with this concept is the attitude of France towards her subject-races in the metropolis. They receive equality, and, if the *âme nègre* movement in post-war literature and art means anything, almost more than equality. They are not relegated to their special niche and tolerated as long as they keep there: there is no obvious differentiation.

On the other hand, the Englishman approaches the native from a certain aloof standpoint. Respect rather than *camaraderie* is the relationship he seeks in his colonies, as a contrast between, say, the West African native corps and the mixed battalions of Morocco will prove. The Englishman insists on the fundamental distinction, even when he does not term it inferiority, and seeks refuge in a polite, and almost pained, aloofness. As Lord Cromer said, Englishmen assimilate less than the French because "our habits are insular, and our social customs render us, in comparison at all events with the Latin races, somewhat unduly exclusive." The Englishman, says the same critic in another place, is wanting in that "social adaptability, in which the French excel."<sup>18</sup> Understanding, if it can only be obtained by mixing indiscriminately in the ordinary life and emotions of his charges, has no appeal for the average English official, nor would his caste permit him so to mingle, even if he wished it. He decrees things for the benefit of those under him, thinking that the judicial impartiality of his attitude is the utmost advance he can make to meet the situation. In a word, he makes the native problem an objective one, the Frenchman throws himself heart and soul and body into native life and makes it essentially subjective. The English tend to be analysts, logical and cool and aloof, calmly dissecting the various phases of native life as they would an anatomical fragment and inter-

<sup>18</sup> Cromer, *Ancient and Modern Imperialism*, pp. 84, 85.

preting each part in the terms of their own thought-processes : whereas the French are synthesists, getting the whole atmosphere and revelling in the getting. Under similar circumstances, the English official tends to withdraw into his thought-laboratory, take away the human phases of the problem, treat it impersonally and according to his code, and, supported by his deity of racial dignity, invoke the spirit of judicial fairness in assigning each element its value. Nor is this a mere rhetorical distinction : it permeates every phase of colonial existence, and explains why the relationships of French and natives are generally more immediate and more emotional than those of English and natives. The one would sacrifice understanding for a judicial view-point, the other would almost sacrifice their cultural dignity if understanding could be bettered that way.

It is no mere hazard that England completely lacks the class of colonial literature that France has so abundantly. In the difference lies the whole root of the matter. As the Leblonds, themselves psychological novelists of note, say in their *résumé* of colonial literature, there is an opposition of ideals between France and England in this regard. "Our colonial literature is impregnated with an instinctive sympathy for the native and has no need to find its models abroad. It remains peculiarly French."<sup>19</sup> The difference is most remarkable. Take Marius Leblond's *Zézère* or *Ulysse Caffre*, with their intimate studies of the souls of natives, —and these, it must be remembered, are but the culmination of a whole school of development. There is a world of difference between these intimate psychological studies and the romantic imagination of a Châteaubriand or the superficial impressionism of a Pierre Loti. Delafosse started the newer study in his analyses of the Congolese,<sup>20</sup> and the intimacy of contact reached its height in the writings of Masqueray and Isabelle Eberhardt, that strange Russian who lived in the desert as an Arab and gave the first real analyses of the Arab soul. Victor Sagalen, in *Les Immémoriaux*, did the same for Tahiti, Robert Randau for Algeria and "*la brousse*," Pierre Rives for Madagascar, and Daguerches and Ajalbert for Indo-China. These writers have no counterpart in England. What is there, for instance, to approach the analysis of the contact of races and tropical neurosis given by Claude Farrère, in *Les Civilisés*, that novel of Indo-Chinese life which was awarded the Goncourt Prize in 1905? What is there like that spontaneous communion with native life which Isabelle Eberhardt achieves in *Dans l'Ombre chaude de l'Islam* (1906) or *Le Trimardeur* (1922), or Bertrand's *Pépète le Bien-Aimé*, or Ajalbert's *Raffin-Su-Su*, or those two remarkable complements, René Maran's *Batouala* and

<sup>19</sup> *Le Roman Colonial* (1926), pp. 9-13.

<sup>20</sup> Series of articles in *L'Afrique Française*, Feb. 1909, et seq.

Gaston Joseph's *Koffi, Roman Vrai d'Un Noir*—wonderful analyses of environmental influences and cultural antagonisms? All of these, and they are but a minority taken at random, testify to that sympathetic study of native life so aptly furthered by the French, and in themselves are conclusive evidence on this one direction of French colonial activities. In the same field, England has *Kim* and little else,—no analysis of the Egyptian spirit, nothing on negro Africa, nothing on India or Malaya, and not even anything on that laboratory of surcharged emotions, the Pacific. If France has hundreds of such psychological novels, many of them based on deep scientific study as well as infused with this sympathetic spirit, and England, with the largest native population in the world, has no such studies, there must be a great divergence between the ways in which each approaches the problems of native life. The constant stream of such studies from Fromentin's Saharan observations of eighty years ago to *L'Étendart Vert* and *Mireille entre les négresses* of 1926 is one of the most interesting, and certainly one of the most revealing, phases of the French colonial effort. It differentiates English and French activities, it explains the easy camaraderie which the Frenchman is able to set up between himself and his native charges, and shows why French native policy is in many ways so striking. England has not this literature, England could not have this literature: and therein is the basic difference between the two native methods.

But, to this easy understanding and sympathetic insight, the French add a certain callousness, inbred by their greater reliance on the military arm and their view of new colonies as providing field-work for the cadets of the *École Militaire* and as training the future leaders of the metropolitan army. Coupled with this is that inverted egoism which finds expression in the destruction of native institutions as a preliminary to an assimilation with the ineffably superior spirit of French civilization. The individual Frenchman will narrow the gap between the native and himself, but will not relinquish this almost religious belief in the peculiar exaltation of his own civilization. He cannot forget the apostolate of 1789, viewed now not so much as a Red Revolutionary spirit as a moderate civilization, hallowed by the efflux of time and, though almost stodgily respectable, unquestionably superior.

If these two attitudes are joined to the sympathetic understanding of the individual, the French relationship towards native populations, or rather the complex of interacting factors that go to make up that relationship, may be understood. These three factors are always there, but they vary in quantity, and it is because of the sudden welling-up of one of them, to the temporary submergence of the others, that the many outward contradictions of French policy are due. But consider the

three as the varying ferment at the back of French ideas, and the variations become capable of explanation. Toqué's cruelty in the Congo, the countenance of miscegenation, and the concession of assimilation, which represent each of these three in turn, thus all became natural. French native policy has been a constant ebb and flow between the contradictions of these three factors, and between the innumerable combinations in which the three may join in varying quantities. That is why one authority will speak of their policy as one of sympathetic tact, and another describe it as dominated by a *concessionnaire* spirit, while a third will term it one of destruction by military repression. All three are right, but none of them goes the whole length and takes into account every phase of French policy. It is really a compound, with the relative importance of each factor determined by the actual conditions in question. The English policy is more unitary, more certain, and clearer, even if it is more limited. It cannot reach the heights of understanding attained at times by the French, but neither does it so often go down to the depths. England has one Tasmania, one Kenya, but France has Algeria and Cochin-China and the Congo and New Caledonia, and *refoulement* in each. The French policy, in a word, is more temperamental and, because of that, may be very much better or very much worse for the native than the English. But perhaps an uninspired fairness and a just mediocrity are at times to be preferred to an undependable emotional understanding, especially when this latter is garnished by trappings of *refoulement* or destruction. Of recent years, English and French theory in this connection have met on the common ground of "association," but, even so, there is still a fundamentally different approach towards native questions, at least in practice.

On the whole, the presence of these varying attributes explains why the French have been successful with negro populations but have failed with Mohammedan. There is no unrest in France's negro-lands, nor has there ever been any serious turmoil since the original suppression of the native States. France understands the easy iconoclasm and the atavistic phases of negro-existence in Africa, and offers legal equality to some, military service to some, and sentimental platitudes about ultimate rights to all. The negroes in the French lands do not want present equality or even present opportunity so much as this imaginative tact. Unenterprising as individuals, the *fact* of progress means little to most of them: they want the spirit of toleration and a jugglery with phrases about their possibilities. These the French give them, and win them over by their sympathy. There is no doubt that France gets nearer to the hearts of the negro-populations than any other European Power. That was why the last Negro Congress, with 400 delegates

from all over the world, became "apostles of the glory of French colonization,"<sup>21</sup> and why Sir Harry Johnston, speaking from his wide experience in Central Africa, said that "taking all in all, I am of the opinion that, since 1871, the French nation has treated the negro problem in a wiser, saner, and more successful fashion than we, the English, have." France gives the franchise to all the negroes in the Antilles and to some of the Senegalese, and relegates none to an outer world through the bars of which they may regard the wonders of superior civilization as exemplified in the person of unimaginative officials,—as the English do.

But this applies only to populations which, like the negro, do not dominate their lives by an attachment to tradition. Religion is not the seal of their society and does not enter into every act of their daily life. Hence, French destructiveness does not find itself in conflict with the bases of their society: they rather welcome the change. It is quite different with Islamic peoples, whose attachment to tradition is religious, and whose religion is a matter of everyday life and quite as much a code of behaviour as a theological dogma. Here, French innovations and even French overtures find themselves brought up against an impassable wall of religious bigotry. They are the despised outsiders, the Unbelievers, whose advances are uniformly repulsed. Their concessions, which would delight an emotional negro population, rouse here only scorn, and any attempt to make them obligatory leads to a *Jehad*. The Moslem invokes his religion to protect himself against French reforms in any field of existence. He shuts the Frenchman out of his life, even if he has to tolerate him as a temporal conqueror, and is not sympathetic towards the French attempts to understand his psychology. Indeed, he regards French inquiries in this direction as one more proof of the inferiority of their civilization. So much a cultural and religious bigot is the average Mohammedan that he cannot conceive of any advantages which he might receive from the French. These latter, therefore, repelled alike in their schemes of reform and their attempts to understand, feel thwarted and resort to their usual Algerian methods of *refoulement*, only to find the gap increasing and the Moslems drawing more and more into the shell of their religious exclusiveness. The French irritate the Moslems and are half humoured, half despised, by them. The childish pride with which the negro accepts the overtures of the French are unknown in the dour Moslem world, because the Mohammedan cannot see the desirability of what he is offered or why he should demean himself by taking unworthy things. He is conquered by the French military machine, that is *Kismet*, but let the Unbelievers remain outside the barrier Mohammed erected

<sup>21</sup> Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, p. 124 note.

and live their own life.<sup>22</sup> That is why France has uniformly failed with Moslem populations. Algerian *refoulement*, Tunisian unrest, the Syrian fiasco, the long wars in Morocco—all are open to the same explanation.

But it is precisely in such a case that the British ideas of cultural aloofness and respect of their adversaries' traditions succeed. The British make their pride in their own culture felt, they disapprove of any attempt at proselytism, and, safe within their own barrier of cultural self-esteem, leave the Moslems within theirs. It is a mutual recognition of non-interference. Both sides have the same unreasonably priggish smugness regarding their civilization: the Englishman makes up for the lack of religious sanctions in his daily life by an ineffable pride of race and caste: and the Moslem, duplicating this attitude from his own standpoint, understands. Both parties surround themselves with a ring-fence, whereas the French, under similar conditions, would endeavour to mix the two flocks in one paddock.

Moslem unrest with the French is therefore more in the nature of cultural antagonism than it is with the English, with whom it is largely a desire to obtain self-government or to clash with other people like the Hindus. In the one case it is mainly social, in the other chiefly political. Despite their emphases on Moslem research, and despite such gestures as the opening of the Paris Mosque, the French have never won over the Moslem soul as they have the negro. So that, in speaking of the "human" nature of their native policy, it must always be remembered that this applies to the negro-lands,—the lands where emotion and an inferiority-complex assume the place taken by religious tradition and cultural pride in Islamic lands.

In conclusion, the French policy of mixed sympathy and destruction may be termed a varying success. The issue depends on the cultural permeability of the subject-race. If, as with the Moslems, they take a firm stand on this question, the French policy fails at the outset and can only lead to irritation and force. That is in cases where their religion is an aggressive force penetrating every phase of existence. It is also in cases where, as with the Arabs and Berbers, the French camaraderie, as interpreted in terms of sexual partnership, finds itself, not esteemed an honour for the recipient, as in negro countries, but the ultimate degradation. The Arab social system thus joins the Mohammedan religion in foredooming the French method of breaking down barriers to failure. Confucianism plays a similar part in forming a cultural barrier in Indo-China, but the conditions of the Pacific, especially in Polynesia, where native custom is decadent, duplicate those of negro-Africa. The relative

<sup>22</sup> The best analysis is in Part III of J. Brevié, *Islamisme contre Naturisme au Soudan Français* (1923),—a long examination of France's Moslem policy.



success of the French method thus comes back to the religious and cultural virility of the people concerned. The French have evolved no method that would suit the Arab and the negro alike, or the Tahitian and the Annamite. Their policy, its subjective nature to the contrary, is not an elastic one in practice.

In the last resort, it comes down to two factors. With races that do not surround themselves with an impassable ring-fence of religious or social aloofness, the French can succeed, because they narrow the gap between ruler and subject, and "humanize" native relationships. That is what is meant by the frequently reiterated platitudes that the French win the hearts of their subjects,—an assertion in which even the militarists join. As Sarraut sums it up:—

"The secret of our colonial place is less in the reality of our force than in the sign of our authority. That sign is the heart, and the native knows it. We are for him friends, beings of the same family,—the great family of human beings. *Less generous perhaps than other nations in the verbal liberalism of the constitutions granted*, we compensate for the parsimony of our colonial franchises by a sincere feeling. With others, the man of colour obtains larger charters perhaps, but never is the threshold of the European residence opened to him or his hand taken by that of the European."<sup>23</sup>

There is much truth in this: the French do not make the natives feel so insignificantly outside the pale as do other Powers, and to this extent the claim that they show the most sympathetic understanding is justified.

But over and against this is the military emphasis, the destruction entailed in the old assimilative *régime*, the *concessionnaire* spirit of the French Congo, and especially the influence of officialdom. The individual official finds himself bound by the letter of his instructions, and, even if he is convinced of the need for a *rapprochement* with the natives in certain directions, he is powerless. As Lord Cromer said, speaking from actual experience, "they are wedded to bureaucratic ideas, and fail to see that it is wiser to put up with an imperfect reform carried with native consent than to insist on some more perfect measure executed in the teeth of strong, although often unreasonable, native opposition."<sup>24</sup> A logically impractical scheme is preferred to an illogically practical one: but it is obvious that the successful native policy has perforce to sanction many customs that are hopelessly illogical from the European point of view but which, when interpreted in terms of native existence and dovetailed in with the peculiarities of the native outlook, assume an entirely different aspect. The Frenchman remains a formalist, and this tends to make

<sup>23</sup> Sarraut (1923), *op. cit.*, p. 122. Compare *Études de Colonisation Comparée* (1925, Franck), p. 4 *et seq.*

<sup>24</sup> Cromer, *Political and Literary Essays* (1913).

arid all of the *rapprochement* brought about by his Gallican *bonhomie*. It is the bureaucratic view-point that seeks uniformity and assimilation to European concepts: it is this that secures destruction and insists on the military arm, that refuses to recognize native existence as something distinct, and that takes away any adaptability a native policy may possess. It is this influence that has alienated the Arabs and that accounts both for the rebellions of the past and the turgid stream of native unrest at present. The individual administrator might have the capacity and the desire for an understanding of his charges, but the administrative *régime* makes him forget everything except that he is a mechanical official. The good points which the French temperament might have made possible in one direction are thus made sterile by the influence of the bureaucratic element: and this always comes to the front. So that, if French native policy is a compound of the Encyclopædic universalism and the liberalism of 1789, if it allows a considerable degree of human understanding and an undeniable sense of native *milieux*, it also countenances much militarism and destruction of native institutions, and is, in the long run, dominated by the one outside factor,—the excessive formalism and consequent mechanical nature of the administrative world. This is the ineradicable feature, the basic element to which priority must be given.

There is thus a clear difference between the customary French and British methods. But it should not be assumed that the French were never influenced by this British concept. On the contrary, until about 1905, it was the excellence of the English method that was preached in France, largely as a contrast to the haphazardly empirical nature of the French themselves. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, for instance, in his editions of the classic *De la Colonisation chez les Peuples Modernes* between 1874 and 1905, praised the English method as the goal and deprecated the efforts of his own countrymen as a series of disconnected and contradictory experiments. And Leroy-Beaulieu was, it must be remembered, the first, the greatest, of the colonial vulgarizers. The Galliéni school, and Lyautey in particular, also took this stand, and they,—who introduced the only element of order there was in the French colonial world,—were constantly looking to what they thought was the ordered plan of British colonial existence, especially in India. This humility lasted for about twenty years, until Marcel Dubois started in a new direction in 1895 with his *Systèmes Coloniaux et Peuples Colonisateurs*. He said that there was no absolute theory of colonization, that the problem was essentially variable, and that, even if it were not, it was very difficult to define any one British colonial method. In a word, he insisted on variation. As the French were even then finding in the difficulties they were experi-

encing in Algeria and Indo-China, it was evident that "the work of colonization depends on the character of the colonizing people and the nature of the people colonized." This especially applied to native policy, where colonial dogmatism had to go and be replaced by a more living human idea. This new orientation was aided by the downfall of extreme assimilation at this time, and by the failure of the uniform method that had been employed in Algeria, Cochinchina, and the Old Colonies. At the same moment, too, the varying colonial policies of the Powers were becoming evident, and France, breaking both from her military methods and from the undue praise bestowed on one foreign system, adopted an elastic comparative view-point. "The mobile, living, and complex idea," wrote Regismanset, himself a specialist at the Ministry of Colonies, "sometimes contradictory but ever conforming to the universal dialectic that we must make of human actions and societies, is infinitely nearer to the fact than the repose of a formulation of abstractions."<sup>25</sup> That is, the French mooted to advance through constant change, the very fact of change and flux testifying to the deeper unity of progress. In this way, Bergson's philosophy of change came to influence colonial doctrine, and all of these factors combined about 1905 to produce the new outlook. France sought adaptability in her colonial policy, especially on its native side, and took stock of the policies of other Powers, until the post-war school arose, preaching the beatitude of a single method of colonization, and that, needless to say, their own—or rather, the one urged during the *Ancien Régime*. The flexibility of a Dubois had given way to the arid dogmatism of a Girault, and French colonial philosophy was once more reduced to something between a legal commentary and a sermon on the duties of colonizing Powers. But, in the interim, the comparative view-point had done its work, and France had been borrowing from other Powers.

The first group of such influences was that of Germany and Belgium. The former in particular influenced French colonial policy at regular intervals, both positively and by way of reaction. As has already been seen, it was Germany's attitude that largely shaped the course of France's colonial activities. Ferry might repudiate with scorn the suggestion that Bismarck had pushed France into Tonkin and Madagascar and Tunisia, but there was some causal relationship. Germany's economic advance after 1870 led France to look on colonies as a safety-valve and in part to overcome the colonial aversion of the eighties. Her turn towards colonization in 1884 made France adopt a forward policy to the last kilometre, even though her own instincts were at this time in quite the opposite direction. Then, it was Germany's early lack of success in Africa,

<sup>25</sup> Regismanset, *Questions Coloniales* (1923), Vol. I, p. 36.

especially when combined with the wonderful harvest reaped by Belgium, that spurred France on in the nineties. It was the increase of Germany's population as compared with that of France, too, which largely shaped the new French native policy,—of better treatment for the natives, a larger respect for their traditions, and association through military service in the "Black Army." At the same time, German methods were influencing the situation in yet another direction. Their efficiency-methods as applied to native production were carefully watched by France after 1900 and, though checked by the outburst against colonial scandals in 1905, were again powerful when France dallied with the idea of industrial colonization. Here the German ideas of securing efficiency in the field of production once more entered, and France, contrasting the economic backwardness of her own colonies, could not but notice. Clearly, therefore, it was not only in matters like going to Morocco to maintain her *amour-propre* that France was influenced by Germany. The Germans often forced the events of French colonization, but, over and above this, their methods and colonial doctrines exerted an appreciable influence.

German colonial methods, like those of any other Power, were curiously mixed and varied from colony to colony.<sup>26</sup> Their system was undoubtedly the most scientific of all and perhaps, in its search for implacable efficiency, the least concerned with human values. They had a definite theory—the exploitation-theory shared with the Dutch and Belgians—and, in the pursuit of that theory, were content to use any methods and accept any sacrifices from the subject-populations. It was the attitude of the all-powerful State, the State of Treitschke and Bernhardi, extended to another sphere. The well-being of the Empire was all that counted, and the natives were considered no more than any inanimate agent of production. They were instruments of efficiency, and only considered as such. The theory was thus simple in its outlines and openly expressed by official agencies. The German Colonial Congress of 1902, for instance, summed up both ends and means :—

"The Colonial Congress thinks that, in the economic interests of the country, it is necessary to render it independent of the foreigner for the importation of colonial raw materials and to create markets as safe as possible for manufactured German goods. The German colonies in the future must play this double rôle, if the natives are forced to labour on public works and agricultural pursuits."

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<sup>26</sup> There is no adequate account of German colonization in either French or English, though a start was made in A. Cheradame (1905). The best way of arriving at an estimate is going through such a collection as, say, Schnee, *Deutsches Kolonial Lexikon* (3 vols., 1920)—where both the good and the bad aspects emerge, because the purpose is scientific rather than propaganda. The statistical position is in *Deutsches Kolonial Kalender und Statistisches Handbuch*, 1914.

That is, they wanted a monopoly—just such a monopoly as is advocated by the French theory of a *mise en valeur*, be it noted—based on forced labour.

To realize this development, they employed large companies. The *Deutsche Handels- und Plantagen-Gesellschaft* in Samoa, for example, established German trading supremacy all over the Central Pacific: the Jaluit Company extended it to Micronesia: the New Guinea Company acquired Northern Papua: the *Deutsche Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft* obtained East Africa: and Companies on the model of the great English Chartered Companies were set up in South-West Africa and the North and South Cameroons.<sup>27</sup> These Companies, State-aided in many cases, had a monopoly within the colonies and sometimes, as in New Guinea, a delegation of governmental authority. The German State was definitely linked with the German trading-house—*Die Flagge folgt dem Handel!*—and colonization was officially taken off the State hands by large *concessionnaire* Companies. Policy beyond that was largely determined by the *Colonialamt* in Berlin, more a commercial body than anything else.

The natives were therefore so many chattels to be dragooned into obedience. Hence the appearance of "the iron hand" so often. There were twenty-nine punitive expeditions in the Cameroons in twelve years (1891–1903); the Hereros of South-West Africa were ruthlessly exterminated in the war of 1907: the natives of New Britain were driven back: and everywhere the military were predominant. In 1897, for instance, there were 2,182 Germans resident in the colonies, and of these two-thirds were soldiers and officials. "We must forswear all sentimental humanitarianism," declared the deputy Schleinwitz, and this was literally the order of the day until 1905.<sup>28</sup> The Germans converted their colonies into efficient factories, handed over to *concessionnaire* companies, and with native interests considered only so far as they resulted in increased efficiency.

But this was not the whole of German policy. English commentators usually stop here, failing to recognize that a partial presentation under these conditions is deliberate misrepresentation. The German colonial system had many features that could not be explained by the above summary. The account given would explain the constant revolts in South-West Africa, in the Cameroons, and in East Africa: and it must be

<sup>27</sup> P. Decherme, *Compagnies et Sociétés coloniales allemandes* (1903), Chap. 4 *et seq.*

<sup>28</sup> For this aspect, see E. Lewin, *The Germans and Africa* (1915), pp. 270, 271. A more impartial account is in Leutwein, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsche Südwest Afrika*.

admitted that most of the blame for these rested with the German failure to understand their native charges. The French did not have as many armed expeditions as these territories saw, nor has there been anything in the French colonies like the fall of Peters or the several instances of gross perversion on the part of individual governors. Still, there are other sides to the situation, and it must be remembered that most of these uprisings took place in the early days of German colonization (in the nineties, when the French were progressing in West Africa through a constant welter of blood), and that in certain territories the cause lay mainly with the recalcitrant populations. The northern slave-states of the Cameroons, for instance, are still unsubdued, even under a mandatory Power; and the natives of all the interior and even part of the coast of ex-German New Guinea still stand out. It is useless, under these conditions, to make a list of military expeditions without analysing the situation to be dealt with. As well interpret British policy in India in terms of the single fact that there are over 300 military expeditions a year on the northern frontier!

Apart from this negative limitation, however, there were certain positive features of German colonial policy.<sup>29</sup> The Germans made Samoa the best-governed colony in the Pacific, as even English missionaries admitted, and secured the loyalty of the natives. In New Guinea they set up native officials,—*tultuls* and *luluais*,—and gave them real power of local government, more indeed than the subsequent mandatory power saw fit to concede. In addition, they laid the basis for an educational system which, far in advance of the existing needs of the situation, has since been continued by the Australian mandatories. Despite their harshness in such matters as corporal punishment, they were not unpopular in New Guinea, because the natives understood a consistent policy of equitable force, whereas, as the Australians found to their cost, the vagaries of an uncertain humanitarian policy were beyond their comprehension. Finally, they developed the plantations of the group far more than the Australians did in the adjacent Papua, despite the more favourable conditions in the latter.<sup>30</sup> In their African colonies a kindred development was noticeable, especially in East Africa; and Germany, her poor lands notwithstanding, made her colonies more productive than did France. Moreover, in winning over the natives, it is a moot point whether the *askaris*, the native militia, of the Germans were not as loyal as the French *tirailleurs*. Everywhere, too, even if in a somewhat detached scientific manner, the Germans promoted schemes

<sup>29</sup> See, for example, the account in O. H. Kobner, *Einführung in die Kolonialpolitik* (1908), p. 71 *et seq.* Page 25 onwards is a good comparative view.

<sup>30</sup> S. H. Roberts, *Population Problems of the Pacific* (1927), p. 162.

for the material well-being of the natives. The motive may have been, probably was, utilitarian, but the result was there just the same. The last budget of Samoa, for instance, provided for various medical specialists and agricultural experiments on a scale unknown, say, in British Fiji; and throughout the African colonies there was the same medical and agricultural care. Compare, for example, the budget-provisions for these matters in the Cameroons and in the neighbouring French Equatorial Africa, or in Togo and Dahomey.<sup>31</sup> The result is perfectly clear. The scientific side of German colonization thus left little to be desired. The encyclopædias on the German colonies remain monuments of colonial erudition and the most comprehensive works of their kind achieved by any Power. A glance through the volumes of Dr. Schnee's *Deutsches Kolonial Lexikon*, for instance, published after the Germans lost their colonies, vindicates their claim to be the most scientific colonists, and this was evident in every colony alike.

Nor can it be asserted that the dominant theory which disregarded native welfare as an end in itself went unchallenged. It was largely a passing phase, in the same way that the policy of assimilation was passing in the French colonies, or subjection in the Belgian Congo. One Minister of Colonies, Bernhard Dernburg (1907), stood out entirely against the older ideas and fought for toleration and progress along native lines. He wanted, he said, "to inspire in native minds, not a terror of the conquering German, but the sentiments of respectful sympathy towards white men, whose principal preoccupation should be to ameliorate the condition of the natives."<sup>32</sup> Even though this emphasized respect where the French would perhaps have stood for sympathy (and in so far approximated more to the English model), it was clearly related to the French idea of "association." Again, Dernburg stood for the passing of that company-*régime* which had been unquestioned since the time of Bismarck and Kayser. "We have not gone to East Africa to found three or four hundred plantations," he argued, "and, interesting though the planters are, the Government cannot compromise the peace and prosperity of the colony simply to give them satisfaction." Schulz, a fellow-reformer, went further and gave practical expression to his system in New Guinea. He insisted that, under the new conditions, "our colonies are colonies of plantations by and for the natives, and their future depends entirely on the cultural development of the natives."<sup>33</sup> His *Kiap*-plantations, as they were called, were ventures at native peasant-proprietorship

<sup>31</sup> See *Die Deutsche Schutzgebiete in Afrika und der Sudsee, 1912-1913* (1914),—Section 4 on each chapter on finance.

<sup>32</sup> Meynier, *L'Afrique Noire* (1911), pp. 250-252.

<sup>33</sup> J. Harmand (1910), *op. cit.*, p. 127 note.

under the control of the German Residents. Similarly, in Samoa, the New Zealanders had but to continue the experiments of their German predecessors in native plantations. Germany was thus evolving the same system of native welfare, both as regarded native officials and native plantations, that the British were working out in Nigeria and East Africa.<sup>24</sup>

In so far as the French interpreted German colonization, however, they saw only the unreformed aspect and borrowed from the Germans the idea of colonial efficiency secured, if need be, by military means. They saw the German executive officials predominant, as their own were, and trying to convert their colonies into factories producing on an industrial model; and in this, too, France wished to follow them. France contrasted the efficiency of the German colonies with the haphazardness of her own, and wanted to infuse a similar directness and force into her overseas possessions. She coveted both the industrialization and the scientific nature of German colonization, but passed over the way in which the Germans utilized native officials and endeavoured to produce peasant-proprietorship, and minimized the importance of the public services which Germany extended to the colonies. Those parts of the German system which she could not utilize, France attacked, and there was the humorous spectacle of the Power that had invented the word *refoulement* and employed this method in the four quarters of the globe in driving back her native populations, the Power that had revelled in a continual military picnic in Africa from 1890 to 1910, taking the Germans to task and labelling their colonial policy as only one of "brutality"! <sup>25</sup> The truth was that France used some German methods, rejected the stark efficiency of the earlier German colonial system, and was jealous of the remainder.

With Belgium, the interaction and the borrowing on the part of the French were more direct. France in her Central African policy was influenced more by the Belgian experience than by any other single factor. The phenomenal success of Leopold in the Congo directly led to French activity in Equatorial Africa: the French borrowed the *concessionnaire* idea from Belgium: Belgian *personnel* was largely used for the police and company forces: Belgian capital played a leading part in the company scheme of 1899: Belgian native methods were adopted *in toto*: and, after the scandals, France reproduced in the Congo every successive stage of Belgian practice. The first thing thus borrowed was the basic idea,—that a colony was a huge domain to be exploited as

<sup>24</sup> For this native policy, see *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Kolonialkongresses* (Berlin, 1924), p. 24 *et seq.* (Rechenburg), or important section, by Zache, in *Das Deutsche Kolonialbuch* (1926, ed. Zache), pp. 41-73. Compare pp. 270, 394.

<sup>25</sup> E.g. by Besson in *L'Afrique Française*, 1921, p. 101.



rapidly and as efficiently as possible. The natives, as the Belgians believed in common with the Germans, were to be subordinated to this end: in their eyes, at least in the early stage, the native problem was only one of production. Forced labour, therefore, was a cardinal feature of the Belgian colonial policy. The natives were denied rights and reduced to semi-slavery. The Belgians officially and openly promulgated this theory, which was not in any sense viewed as an inevitable but deplorable concession to circumstances. They formulated a definite theory, based on colonial exploitation and native subjugation, and proceeded to enforce it, through the medium of *cessionnaire*-companies and troops of black mercenaries.

In detail, the Belgian theory meant an initial destruction of all that was vital in native life and then a reduction of the amorphous mass that remained to the status of a vast black proletariat. As the Governor-General's circular of 1906 summed up the matter:—"In annihilating the prestige and authority of the native chief, this policy ends in leaving the State face to face with a population freed of all social liens and without any attachment to the soil."<sup>36</sup> This was the Algerian policy of *refoulement* carried still further and defined with a cynical frankness (or an unconscious cynicism) unusual with colonial Powers. The basic features of native life—polygamy and domestic slavery, for instance, or anything else that gave coherence to existence,—were thus attacked. The political organization was deliberately smashed, as when a decree of 1910 broke the original tribal groupings and set up artificial chiefdoms, which did not at all correspond to the old units. Then, when the old power was effectively shattered, so was the new. The police reorganization of 1917, for instance, consciously weakened the authority of the new chiefs, the idea being to leave the natives as an unorganized mass. By this date, the Belgians had achieved their one end and had so far broken native rule that they could resort to direct administration, without the intermediary of any native officials, either old or new. The customary native organizations were therefore replaced by a delegation of administrative authority, and Belgian officials stood alone, directly opposite a native rabble.

This policy, as is at once evident, sums up the history of the French Congo as well. Indeed, to the time of the reforms of 1907, the French colony might have been simply an extended province of the Belgian, so similar were the methods it employed. But there was the difference that the Belgians secured an efficient exploitation, whereas the French, though

<sup>36</sup> In G. van den Kerken, *Les Sociétés Bantoues du Congo Belge et les Problèmes de la politique indigène* (1920), p. 121 et seq. Compare *Compte Rendu du Congrès Colonial National* (Brussels, 1921), p. 323.

resorting to the same means, could not make their work effective and simply saw their colony limping on from year to year. Both States alike, however, used the same methods. The natives were refused rights: regional-guards dragooned them into slavery: all unoccupied land was viewed as belonging to the State: and the interests of the *concessionnaire*, with whom the Government worked in a narrow collaboration, alone counted.<sup>37</sup>

After about 1911, however, a change came. The drift in the French Congo and the publicity given to the scandals led the Belgians to make conditions in their colony more like those of West Africa. There, the French, while keeping in the main to direct rule, at least considered native customs and traditions, and, especially after 1910, tempered the directness of their rule by insisting on a larger degree of association. The theories of Paris softened the directness of the men on the spot, and, owing to the force of circumstances, a gradually widening amount of development on native lines was allowed. With the Belgians this realization came more slowly. As long as they drained raw rubber from the Congo rivers, questions of administration remained in the background. But when, after about 1917, the draining stage was over and production needed to be fostered artificially, the newer considerations obtained a hearing.

The earlier theory broke down. It had aimed at making a working rabble of the mass of the natives and assimilating those whose aid was necessary for the sovereign State to achieve its ends. The Belgian charter denied rights to most of the natives, but gave a minority, like soldiers and workers and mission-educated natives, all the civil rights of Belgian citizens. This was an ingenious combination of the French theories of assimilation and exploitation, and in both cases was aimed at destroying the earlier native structure. Assimilation, however, played a larger part in the Belgian Congo than in French West Africa, and, in the years after 1910, it appeared as if this tendency were gathering support. But, when the planting conditions changed and when colonization became an industrial proposition, the Belgians changed their policy to conform to the changing conditions. Colonization was industrialized and made more efficient, but efficiency could scarcely be promoted by a mass of "denationalized" natives, neither those reduced to serfdom nor those divorced from their native life by the concession of the franchise. In either case, there had to be a reversion to the saner and healthier policy of development on native lines—to the indirect rule of the English or the *association* of the French. In November, 1920, therefore, the Belgian Minister of Colonies admitted the failure of the earlier policies and

<sup>37</sup> Van den Kerken (1920), *op. cit.*, pp. 153, 229 *et seq.* Compare paper by Franck in *Études de Colonisation Comparée* (1925), p. 79.

outlined the new one. "We absolutely break with the policy of assimilation. We claim that the native society should freely develop after its own manner, its own nature, its own milieu. We must respect and *develop* native institutions, and not, as heretofore, break them." <sup>22</sup>

The Belgian conversion could not have been more pronounced. Passing through the stages of exploitation and "exploitation-cum-assimilation," they were at last on the firm foundations of development on native lines. During the same years, an exactly similar development had been taking place in West Africa, and, although the French had dispensed with the idea of assimilation at an earlier date and started dabbling with the idea of association before the Belgians did, the similarity of development between the two colonies was very striking. Each Power affected the other, especially in the final stages. Joint Colonial Conferences were called, as when Franck and Sarraut, the Belgian and French Ministers of the Colonies, met in 1924 and reached uniformity on the essentials of native policy. The two policies, therefore, have interacted on each other, especially in the first and last phases: the central phase in the Belgian Congo, though reminiscent of the French division between the privileged communes and the outsiders in the Senegal, was never so developed in French lands. But, at the other stages, the reciprocal influence was most marked. At present France is seriously cognizant of the Belgian attitude towards native policy and views the abnegation of past methods as a striking confirmation of her own *association* policy: and, in turn, the Belgian interpretation of colonization as primarily an industrial function has been perhaps one of the strongest forces since the Millerand Ministry extended its ideas of economic specialization to the colonial world. Belgium perhaps ranks higher than Germany in thus directly influencing modern French colonial policy, and certainly the influence seems growing.

In Africa, France also watched Portuguese policy. At the time of the Company-boom of the nineties in particular, the French had plans of becoming the economic sponsors of Portuguese colonialism and turned with interest to the Portuguese policy. That policy was even simpler than the contemporary Belgian or German schemes, though very similar. It was a method of colonizing by concessions. South-east Africa, for example, was largely partitioned amongst four Companies, one of which, the Mozambique Company, had unlimited sovereign rights over 150,000 square miles of territory. In Angola, the Company of Mossamédès received 23 million hectares in 1894 with absolute control

<sup>22</sup> *Congrès Colonial National*, Brussels, 1921, p. 325 *et seq.* Compare Second Congress, 1923, p. 195.

of over a million natives, and most of the capital was French.<sup>39</sup> Beyond this delegation of powers, Portuguese policy was one of oppression pure and simple. The Governor or the *concessionnaire*-company was the proprietor of everything, natives included, and there was no native policy other than subjection. The *Pacte Colonial* applied in all its vigour: slavery was maintained: the natives were kept in order by corps of Pombeiros, half-castes who were the result of the extensive racial mixture: and in general, colonial methods never got beyond the stage of the seventeenth century. The Portuguese colonies certainly seemed to support the lesson of the Belgian Congo and to buttress France in her ideas of colonial exploitation and the utilization of *concessionnaire*-companies. But French policy was never as baldly devoid of duties as was the Portuguese, which may surely be termed the negation of policy.<sup>40</sup>

On a far different plane were the Dutch ideas, which largely influenced France's tropical policy, especially in Indo-China. The experiences of the Dutch in Java and the English in Ceylon were constant beacons to French policy, and reappear again and again as a *motif* in the determination of that policy. Until about 1875, Dutch policy was clear. It was avowedly one of exploiting these rich tropical archipelagos in the most direct fashion. Holland wanted to draw as much wealth as possible from them and for the smallest expenditure. The Dutch Government was simply "an armed instrument for extracting wealth."<sup>41</sup> This went on unchecked until the brief but important interlude of 1811-1814, when an Englishman, Stamford Raffles, took over control for a time and shaped the lines of future policy.<sup>42</sup> After three centuries of Dutch rule, he found a military road, "a bankrupt and terrorized people," and a large export trade. He tried to reverse all this and to consider the native view-point. He reformed everything,—revolutionized the legal system, revived the village or communal government of the natives, established the idea of rule by a native aristocracy advised by European officials,

<sup>39</sup> Darcy, *Conquête de l'Afrique* (1900), pp. 163-178, or Meynier (1911), *op. cit.*, pp. 210-212.

<sup>40</sup> The account in A.-L. de Almada Negreiros, *Colonies Portugaises. Les Organisations politiques indigènes* (1910) is clearly apologist, but the real system is hinted at, e.g. in pp. 103, 162 n., 167, 189. A much better analysis is by de Lannoy in *Bulletin de Colonisation Comparée*, 1909, pp. 97, 149 *et seq.* See esp. p. 104 for "The New Era, 1878 onwards." A decree of 23/10/26, it should be noted, gives the natives in Portuguese colonies all the rights of Europeans. Their traditions are respected, the powers of their chiefs recognized, special tribunals for native affairs set up, and a Committee of Protection instituted in each district. The need for a change was quite obvious.

<sup>41</sup> C. Day, *The Dutch in Java* (1904), or the introduction to J. Chailley-Bert, *Java et ses Habitants* (1914 edition). A good short article is in *Bulletin de Colonisation Comparée*, 1909, p. 49.

<sup>42</sup> R. Coupland, *Raffles* (1926), p. 31 *et seq.*

ended the evils of the Dutch feudal system, abolished the old compulsory delivery of crops, and encouraged the natives by means of long leases to become small planters. Naturally, all of these cataclysmic changes were anathema to the Dutch, and Raffles was forced to go in 1815. But, in the century after him, the Dutch, almost against their own will, gradually adopted every principle for which he stood.

Nevertheless, their conversion was very slow, for the exploitation-idea died hard,—or rather, the Dutch were slow in seeing that new and more conciliatory methods of exploitation could be more efficient, even from a frankly utilitarian point of view. At first, they kept Raffles' governmental system, as they soon saw that indirect rule through controlled native chiefs was the most effective under the circumstances. But they rejected his economic reforms and kept as the basis of their system the ideas of "forced cultures." This, the idea of Governor van der Bosch, was really part-time slavery. Previously, the natives had paid to the Government a certain proportion of their crops as a tax: hereafter, they were to put at the Government's disposal a certain proportion of their land and labour. This was the system which soon became recognized as the chief feature of Dutch colonial theory, and the last vestiges of it lingered on till 1917. Of course, the sole desire was to obtain more money for the Dutch Treasury; but, as time went on, the system involved more and more compulsion with a constantly diminishing return. It was a form of slave-labour, with all of the economic weaknesses of slave-labour.<sup>43</sup>

It lasted intact, however, despite its growing economic faults, until about 1870, when the rise of the Liberals in Holland necessitated a change. Multatuli's *Max Havelaar*, one of the most telling novels ever written on the problems of tropical colonization, had exposed the evils of the system; and, over and above this humanitarian motive, it was becoming clear that a freer form of development could even increase the State yield under the new industrial conditions. The main part of the system, therefore, was abolished in the twelve years after 1870, but it went on for three of the principal crops after that date, and it was not until 1917 that the culture-system was abolished for coffee, the last of the crops so limited.

With the collapse of this frankly spoliatory system, Dutch colonial policy underwent a radical change, so much so that it is completely erroneous to describe the policy of the years after 1882 in terms of the system which prevailed before that date. Methods and aims alike differed, and in some respects, as regards indirect rule and the technical

<sup>43</sup> J. A. Collet, *L'Evolution de l'Esprit Indigène aux Indes Néerlandaises* (1921), p. 27.

education of the natives, for instance, Dutch rule is one of the most liberal in the colonial world. Since about 1909, as it has been said, "they have been endeavouring to atone for the past." At present they realize that native co-operation in government and native proprietorship in the economic world are fundamental desiderata.<sup>44</sup> That is why, for example, they allowed a *Volksraad* or embryonic Parliament in 1918,—so real a concession that it has become the model aimed at by the Indo-Chinese agitators.<sup>45</sup> That is why, too, they have developed credit-institutions and established model agricultural colonies so that to-day the natives produce 40 per cent. of the entire produce of the group. The educational programme of 1917, drawn up with these new ends in view, vies with that of the Philippines in being one of the most suitable for native populations. In all of these directions, and in many others (the solution of the problems of the 100,000 *Indos* or half-castes, to take a case at random), the Dutch have vindicated their claims to be progressive reformers, and it can reasonably be asserted that Java to-day is one of the most instructive native regions of the world.

In so far as French policy was concerned, there was never anything directly like the Dutch culture-system outside of Equatorial Africa. But the French knew the basic principle, and, in Indo-China and West Africa, resorted to forced labour until quite recently. Moreover, if they did not know the abject exploitation of the earlier years of Dutch policy, neither did they share the progressiveness which has transformed that policy in the last quarter of a century. Reformers in the French colonies at present advocate the Dutch system of government and economics as a kind of goal on the horizon: official circles, however, will only go as far as recognizing the desirability of many of the economic reforms and the educational system, but do not regard the Dutch system of decentralization and the *Volksraad* with any favourable eye. The French Government in Indo-China, for instance, has sent numerous economic missions to Java and has also investigated the causes of the far greater efficiency of the Dutch official system than their own. But they resolutely refuse to advance in the direction of the political enfranchisement allowed by the Dutch.

What intrigues them about the Dutch system is the nature of its officialdom. The Dutch have far fewer officials than the French, and yet manage State matters more exhaustively and efficiently. Officialdom is the dominant note in Java, as it is in Indo-China, but the order and effectiveness of Java contrast very markedly with the haphazardness of official control in Annam and Tonkin. The Dutch policy is to leave the

<sup>44</sup> Paper by Idenburg in *Études de Colonisation Comparée*, 1925, p. 55 *et seq.*

<sup>45</sup> J. A. Collet (1921), *op. cit.*, p. 92 *et seq.*

native chiefs in office and to guide them by means of Residents behind the scenes. Until a few years ago, the idea was to obtain a rigidly centralized officialdom ; but now, while officialdom is still to be triumphant and while the benevolently despotic control is to go on, it is no longer as centralized or as immediately felt. It is always in the background, ready to be produced, but the chiefs are the visible symbols of power, the intermediaries between Government and people. Contrast with this effective system the numerous vacillations in Tonkin and the utter ineffectiveness of French control in Annam, though nominally the system there closely resembles the Dutch !

The French, in a word, envy the efficiency and method of control of the Dutch executive, but cannot uproot the pall of inert bureaucracy,—the bureaucracy so pilloried by Messimy and Viollette fifteen years ago and that covers most things in Indo-China. Perceiving this, they tend to deprecate the Dutch system as concealed direct rule and to oppose the political concessions as the height of folly. As a result, they concentrate on following the Dutch example on the economic side alone,—both as regards the flourishing European plantations and the vast scale of native agriculture. Dutch colonial policy remains a mystery to the French, and, while they cannot deny the results so achieved, they tend to minimize the significance of that which they themselves can neither emulate nor understand. Colonial theorists, however, and still more, native reformers, couple Java with the Philippines in the forefront of their list of tropical achievements,—at least under conditions somewhat similar to those of France's Asiatic lands ; and it may reasonably be assumed that there will be a great increase in the growing interaction which has been noticeable between Indo-China and Java in the last twenty years, especially since the modernization of production and the introduction of new crops in Cochin-China. The Dutch have made themselves the mentors of colonial methods in South-eastern Asia, and the French are conforming, just as in Africa they are coming into line with the Belgian methods of industrial colonization. In both cases, French colonies adjoin those of other Powers which have had greater achievements, particularly on the economic side ; and in both cases they are drawing closer. This adaptability, and even the recognition by the French that they are lagging behind in some respects, is certainly more hopeful than the earlier aloofness. It is more profitable to learn from one's neighbours in such cases than to deny or criticize their achievements, and the French have been realizing this in the last two decades.

A further important influence has been exerted on general French practice by the latest entrant in the colonial field,—Italy. Here, the impulse has been entirely in the direction of reaction, but it was the

stronger because of that antagonism. The French have violently opposed the principles of Italian colonization and have, through this reaction, been more confirmed in their own methods. They describe Italian methods as "a more or less happy combination of Latin *camaraderie*, political cleverness, and a very Mediterranean skill of diplomacy." But the crux of this policy is in two features,—its adroit winning-over of the Moslem fraternities of the desert, and the concession of very liberal rights to the natives,<sup>46</sup> both of which work in the direction of antagonizing France's Mohammedan populations, and which, France asserts, are influenced, if not actually dominated, by that consideration. The seat of the leading fraternities is in the Libyan *hinterland*, and these bodies have always been the gravest obstacle in the way of any settlement of France's policy towards Islam. This Franco-Italian antagonism in the colonial field reached its height in 1919, when, at the height of the French difficulties in Tunisia, Italy, at a single stroke, enfranchised the whole of her Libyan subjects. She gave these Mohammedans, scarcely subdued though they were, all the rights of Italian citizens and in addition, allowed them to keep their characteristic Mohammedan privileges,—their *état civil* and the like. Yet the Algerians and Tunisians were pleading, in parts almost fighting, for even a small degree of recognition along these lines, while France would not concede the principle of naturalization to the masses, and, even for the privileged few, made the renunciation of their Mohammedan privileges a necessary prelude to any naturalization. Just at this moment, Italy allowed *all* natives to become citizens, and all to keep their religious rights!<sup>47</sup> It will easily be understood, therefore, why the French resolutely oppose the principles of Italian colonization, because the Italian acts have been the hardest blow France has ever had to counter in dealing with her North African populations. The schemes to represent Italian colonials, even those resident in foreign possessions, in an Imperial Roman Parliament also accentuate the French difficulties by increasing the unrest amongst the Italians in the three Mauretaniae. Under these conditions, France not unnaturally rejected the adroitness and ultra-liberalism of the Italians, and Italy, by thus directly inhibiting certain lines of advance, became a real force shaping French colonial policy.

In all, then, France has learned most from Belgium, Germany, and Holland. She has always assumed British methods, both those of the Dominions and the native countries, to be quite apart from her own, and was curiously little influenced in practice by them. The aims and methods

<sup>46</sup> See *La Rinascita della Tripolitania* (1926, ed. Volpi), Part 2, Chap. 2, p. 125—"Il nuovo indirizzo politico."

<sup>47</sup> See Chap. VII, Section V, above.



of British colonization found little support in France after the time of Leroy-Beaulieu, and indeed, until the rise of the *association* theory, French and British policies had little in common. Moreover, in the last resort, even taking into account the influence of neighbouring tropical possessions, French policy remained largely French. It had essential attributes of its own, and was always predominantly North Latin. The idea of exploitation in some form or other was always in the background. Even now, colonies are considered mainly as subordinate agencies strengthening the mother-land and existing to be exploited, even if this exploitation is no longer, as formerly, to be secured at the cost of native suffering. Over and above this basic principle, French policy remains a mixture,—a fusion in varying degrees of understanding and impulsiveness, of force and assimilation, or more often the destruction that precedes, and is the only practicable part of, assimilation. Always a tendency to direct rule, always centralization within the colony and from Paris, and always executive control,—these remain the pillars of the colonial structure.

This gets to the root of the matter. France rules her colonies as she does her departments, and these she rules in the light of that spirit which has most shaped modern France,—the spirit of Romanization. In essence, things French are Roman, and nowhere does this apply more than in the colonial field, for there, changed conditions notwithstanding, France is directly endeavouring to repeat Roman methods. The similarity is striking, so striking and obvious in fact, that one tends to pass over the characteristics in question as being distinctively neither Roman nor French, but component parts of *any* scheme of colonization. But a little reflection shows that this is not so, and that these characteristics are not obvious platitudes in the colonial scheme of things, but the result of the positive duplication of Roman methods in the modern French colonies. Louis Bertrand, in his works fighting for a recrudescence of the Roman spirit in North Africa, and dreaming again of the three Mauretalias and a neo-classical Empire, is thus no mere visionary, no dreamer of impractical things, but an exponent of what the French have actually accomplished, and what they stand for. He is more an observer than a romanticist, because the French Empire *is*, and always has been, Roman.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it may be stated that these attributes of French policy, varied though they may be, find expression in a remarkably uniform practice, however different may be the conditions in the colonies in question. Over all is the centralized bureaucracy, controlling every-

thing in colonial existence and denying the colonies an adequate development as separate entities. In particular, no form of political evolution is countenanced. The colonies are insufficiently developed from an economic point of view. They offer but a tithe of what they could produce, given reasonable aid in capital and public-works, and find their development hindered, and at times positively forbidden, by the absurd system of tariff-assimilation. For the natives there is a policy which differs in theory and practice. Theoretically, it is one of *association* or collaboration, allowing the maximum degree of development on native lines; yet, in practice, the old ideas of direct-rule by a European executive crop up in most of the colonies. It is only in certain cases that native officials are utilized to the utmost degree and only recently that native codes, in Indo-China and West Africa, for instance, have been sufficiently taken into account in the legal and administrative worlds.

In detail, France has been successful with negro populations, but has tended to alienate Islam, although not to the extent of causing chronic unrest in her Mohammedan lands. At present, accepting the prosperous Indo-China as a bulwark of her Oriental interests, she dreams of a North Africa leavened by a French basis and spirit, and linked on to a black Empire to the South, with the whole forming a compact *bloc* and furnishing raw materials and men to strengthen the metropolis.

In the last resort, the French remain Imperialistic visionaries, vacillating between theory and practice. They want Romanization, and every instinct of their being works in this direction of assimilation. Yet they prate of *association* and do everything except introduce a genuine indirect rule! They dabble with widespread economic schemes and plan projects for a systematic *mise en valeur* for the whole of their Empire, but keep away from conditions of hard fact and refuse to tackle the more immediate but less spectacular reforms. And so they continue, with new theories and still more theories, but always with the same basic executive control and the same immobility, necessitating as these do an almost complete gap between their theories and their actual policies. This cleavage it is which allows France to dream of the Empire as one of continual flux and yet to continue the single system of control. French colonial policy is in this sense large-scale national delusion: it remains for the most part immobile and, at basis, subject to the same principles which were used in dealing with Canada in the days of the *Intendants*.

Yet it is difficult to convey any impression of its many-sidedness in a few statements. It is a mixture in which many elements or influences enter in an inextricably confused fashion. It is a brew compounded of many things and greater than the sum of its component parts. First and foremost comes the basis—Tartarin and Quixote. "There is always

a little of Tartarin in the French temperament," exclaimed Daudet : in the colonial world, it becomes the basis. Add the *marsouin* Barnavaux, Pierre Mille's type of the ubiquitous colonial soldier, for the men who made it,—not forgetting the stalwart native *tirailleur* who aided them. Mix in any regulation-ridden official of the École Coloniale for the spirit,—the type is unmistakable,—Class B in the *Annuaire du Ministère*, rarely thinking as sentient individuals, and with their world and thoughts limited by those acts which will ensure the red rosette of the Legion of Honour after thirty years of painstaking service. Bava, Zimmer's Falstaffian figure, must not be forgotten for the politician and lesser functionary of Paris,—busily well-intentioned and always interfering, but unfortunately never quite in touch with the reality of the situation. Then come a number of flavouring elements, bearing the same relation to the foregoing as the juices of flowers do to the old spirit in a well-mixed *liqueur*,—the Galliéni type for the idealism, Randau's Cassard for the dilettante settler, Toqué for the atavistic side, Sarraut for the perfect schemes that never come to very much, any Luigi Antonelli or Ah Toy for the only private enterprise there, and a Guignol touch for the pathos and comedy mixed. Then mix the whole, and neutralize any element that might give distinction to the mixture by infusing again with the spirit of the cravatted gentlemen of the Rue Oudinot : stir with the pestle of French industrial interests (the second greatest force in French colonization), and place the mixture in the only surrounding where it has any meaning,—the dinner of general French existence.

The resultant *liqueur*, very piquant but not very substantial, will be typically French and will exemplify both the good and the bad features of their colonial policy. But it still leaves the partaker uncertain which element is the most typical. Perhaps, after all, it might be the spectacle of the Senegalese mothers hastening to the five privileged communes to be delivered, with a reflection that the fathers of the children are just such persons as that Sergeant Malamine who, assisted by a tricolour and a negro nonchalance, defied Stanley's entire field-force on the Congo forty years ago. Yet again, Tahiti, on the other side of the world, might be taken as summing up still more of the features of French policy. Tahiti, with its merry little Paris of Papeete and its undeveloped interior, its erstwhile Minister of the Interior whose only charges were mountain goats, and its Board of Agriculture without a single practical farmer, its harbour-scheme that is so virile as to survive fourteen years of continual reports and that still remains a scheme : Tahiti, with its crowds of officials and its complaisant natives, its Chinese immigrants who alone are energetic and who are obtaining a hold on everything in the group, its heaps of *arrêts* and its huge scope for

development ; and over all, the plaintive note of *ari'ana*,—" by and by." *Ari'ana*,—a feverish activity to little purpose and a turning-away from the things that are vitally urgent to general plans that are impracticable,—best represents French effort. Despite the sacrifices of those who built up the Empire (and the conquest, say of the Sahara, from Flatters to Laperrine, is nothing short of an epic), the reward has been disproportionate to the effort. The French remain elaborate town-builders but not sewage-experts : and yet they keep their populations stable, except in Moslem lands. In these last four facts, jumble though they may seem, one perhaps gets as near as possible to the real nature of French colonization,—a great work, but one more heroic than efficient, and one still full of faults and extravagances—and opportunities !



## **APPENDICES**

**LIST OF CHIEF COLONIAL OFFICIALS.  
BIBLIOGRAPHY.**



# LIST OF CHIEF COLONIAL OFFICIALS

## UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

Felix Faure . . . . .	November 14, 1881–January 30, 1882.
Berlet . . . . .	January 30, 1882–August 8, 1882.
Felix Faure . . . . .	September 22, 1883–April 28, 1885.
A. Rousseau . . . . .	April 28, 1885–November 10, 1885.
De La Porte . . . . .	January 15, 1886–June 7, 1887.
Eug. Etienne . . . . .	June 7, 1887–January 5, 1888.
Felix Faure . . . . .	January 5, 1888–February 19, 1888.
De La Porte . . . . .	February 19, 1888–February 23, 1889.
Eug. Etienne . . . . .	February 23, 1889–March 8, 1892.
E. Jamais . . . . .	March 8, 1892–January 11, 1893.
Delcassé . . . . .	January 11, 1893–December 3, 1893.
M. Lebon . . . . .	December 3, 1893–March 20, 1894.

## MINISTERS OF THE COLONIES

(Date of appointment given : tenure of office—till next date.)

Boulanger (Casimir Périer Ministry) . . . . .	March 20, 1894.
Delcassé (Dupuy Ministry) . . . . .	May 30, 1894.
Chautemps (Ribot Ministry) . . . . .	January 26, 1895.
Gieuyssé (Bourgeois Ministry) . . . . .	November 4, 1895.
André Lebon (Méline Ministry) . . . . .	April 29, 1896.
G. Hanotaux . . . . .	June 1, 1898.
Trouillot . . . . .	June 28, 1898.
Guillain . . . . .	November 1, 1898.
Decrais (Waldeck-Rousseau Ministry) . . . . .	June 22, 1899.
Doumergue (Combes Ministry) . . . . .	June 7, 1902.
Clémentel (Rouvier Ministry) . . . . .	January 24, 1905.
G. Leygues (Sarrien Ministry) . . . . .	March 14, 1906.
Milliès-Lacroix (Clemenceau Ministry) . . . . .	October 25, 1906.
Trouillot (Briand Ministry) . . . . .	July 24, 1909.
Morel . . . . .	November 3, 1910.
Messimy (Caillaux Ministry) . . . . .	March 2, 1911.
Lebrun (Poincaré Ministry) . . . . .	June 27, 1911.
Resnard . . . . .	January 12, 1913—the start of the short-term Ministries.



Morel . . . . .	January 21, 1913.
Lebrun . . . . .	December 9, 1913.
Maunoury . . . . .	June 9, 1914.
Raynaud . . . . .	June 13, 1914.
Doumergue (Viviani Ministry) . . . . .	August 26, 1914.
Maginot (Ribot Ministry) . . . . .	March 21, 1917.
Besnard . . . . .	September 13, 1917.
H. Simon (Clemenceau Ministry) . . . . .	November 17, 1917.
A. Sarraut . . . . .	January 20, 1920.

## GOVERNORS-GENERAL OF ALGERIA

Vice-Admiral de Gueydon . . . . .	March, 1871-June, 1873.
General Chanzy . . . . .	June, 1873-February, 1879.
Albert Grévy . . . . .	March, 1879-November, 1881.
Tirman . . . . .	November, 1881-April, 1891.
Jules Cambon . . . . .	April, 1891-September, 1897.
Lépine . . . . .	September, 1897-August, 1898.
Laferrière . . . . .	August, 1898-October, 1900.
Jonnart . . . . .	October, 1900-June, 1901.
Révoil . . . . .	June, 1901-April, 1903.
Jonnart . . . . .	May, 1903-March, 1911.
Lutaud . . . . .	March, 1911-January, 1918.
Jonnart . . . . .	January, 1918-July, 1919.
Abel . . . . .	July, 1919.

## RESIDENTS-GENERAL OF TUNISIA

M. Roustan . . . . .	for original negotiations.
Paul Cambon . . . . .	March, 1882.
Massicault . . . . .	November, 1886.
C. Rouvier . . . . .	November, 1892.
R. Millet . . . . .	November, 1894.
S. Pichon . . . . .	March, 1901.
Alapetite . . . . .	December, 1906.
Flandin . . . . .	October, 1918.
Saint.	

## GOVERNORS-GENERAL OF WEST AFRICA

Chaudié . . . . .	1895-1900.
Balley . . . . .	1900-1902.
Roume . . . . .	1902-1908.
Ponty . . . . .	1908-1915.
Clozel . . . . .	1915-1917.
Van Vollenhoven . . . . .	1917-1918.
Angoulvant . . . . .	1918-1919.
Merlin . . . . .	1919-1923.
Carde . . . . .	1923-



















